THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP

SIR FREDERICK TREVES

THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP

VICTORINE.

Frontispiece.

THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP

AN ACCOUNT OF A VOYAGE TO THE WEST INDIES

BY

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PREFACE.

THAT fervent spirit of adventure and romance which set aglow the heart of every lad in every sea town of England, when Elizabeth was queen, found both its source and its end among the West Indies and by the Spanish Main.

The palm-covered island, the secret creek, the white-walled Spanish town formed the scene of ever-inspiring dreams. The boy from the grandmotherly coaster, who found his way into Plymouth Sound, would sit on a bollard on the quay and listen to sun-browned men talking of Indians and sea fights, of Plate ships and pieces of eight, until his soul so burned within him that he turned upon his own homely craft, and shipped as powder-boy on the first galliasse making for the heroic West.

In these fair islands were gold and pearls, they said, as well as birds and beasts beyond the imagination of man. Here under the steaming sun of the tropics the pirate harried the sea, and here, in blood, smoke, and cutlass hacks his tale was writ. In coves among the islands he careened his ship and hid his treasure, in blue sea alleys he watched for Spanish merchantmen, and in fever-stricken jungles he rotted and died. For over a century the famous Buccaneers were the terror of the Spanish Main, while to every sturdy British lad, for all these years, the call of the sea rover was as the call of the wild.

The very first glimpse of the New World that met the gaze of Columbus was a glimpse of a West Indian island. For some three centuries after his coming, the coasts the great navigator tracked out were the scene of a sea life whose common round was one of

ever desperate adventure. For three centuries ships poured westward from nearly every port in Europe, laden with arms and men, searching for strange riches and for a sight of the marvels of the new earth.

Through the island channels lay the passage to El Dorado, to Manoa, the city of the lake, where the streets were paved with gold, and down these sea-ways, radiant with hope, sailed Raleigh, the dreamer, on his road to fortune.

It was among these islands and along the Main that there came to Drake the strength and craft that crushed, in fulness of time, the Spanish Armada. Here was served the apprenticeship of Dampier, of Frobisher, of Hawkins, and of a host of mighty sailormen who have made the ocean memorable.

It was to the West Indies that Nelson took his first voyage, a voyage from which the puny lad "returned a practical seaman." It was here that he held his first command. It was here that he learnt from the quarter-deck of his little brig the elements of war.

In the seclusion of these gorgeous islands, indeed, the long sea story of England was begun. The West Indies became the nursery of the British Navy, the school where the thews were hardened and the sea lessons learned. Here was fostered and fed that soul of adventure and reckless daring which inspired the early colonist and made invincible the man with the boarding pike. Here grew, from puny beginnings, the germ of the great Sea Power of the World.

In the proud romance of the sea, in the ocean songs and epics, in the sea stories which have been told and retold to generations of British lads, in the breeding of stout-hearted men and the framing of far-venturing ships, the islands have been no less than the Cradle of the Deep.

Thatched House Lodge, Richmond Park,
Kingston-on-Thames. March 1908.

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THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP.

I.

FROM THE CITY OF FOG TO AN ISLAND OF ETERNAL SUMMER.

LONDON in mid-December, on the eve of the departure of the mail steamer for the West Indies, was a disconsolate place.

The least woeful spot, perhaps, was Regent Street at high noon. The road was covered with a sour, chocolate-coloured mud which spat viciously from under the Juggernaut wheels of motor omnibuses. Above there was no suggestion of either atmosphere or sky, but merely a pall of fog as cheerless as a poor-house blanket. The street began in mist and ended in mist, while into the same gelid shadow the carriages vanished. Things were seen as through a glass darkly, so that the housetops looked like distant battlements.

There was a smell abroad as of mildew, seasoned by the stench of petrol and the acrid filth of the street. The shop windows were steamed over by a clammy sweat. Within were half-suffocated lights, for the day showed no distinctions of morn, afternoon or eventide.

The people who walked the pavements kept their eyes upon the slimy stones. They seemed narcotised by a cold, the shrewdness of which no thermometer could register. The only sounds that cheered them were the hissing of wheels, the hammering of hoofs, and the occasional jingle of hansom-cab bells.

The only patch of colour I can remember in this last walk in London was derived from a yellow and red poster dealing

with Christmas festivities. It was carried by a damp, sepia-tinted man, and the gaudy colours were reflected in the pool of liquid mud over which he stood stupefied. There was also a barrow filled with holly—a pile of shining leaves and scarlet berries—but beyond these the houses, the vehicles, and the people were all chilled down to the general grey of cellar mould.

Then came an indefinite sea journey, in no way unlike so many others, marked by recollections of a fading port, the thud of engines, the scud of the wave under the ship's bow, the landing from a boat on a hot, white quay crowded with negroes.

As the last association with any land was concerned with a walk along Regent Street, so the next took the form of swimming in a pool within the coral reef at Barbados.

It was again high noon. The rays of the tropical sun were keen as a hot sword-blade. The sea was sensuously warm. On the shore, on the edge of a coral cliff some twelve feet high, was a bathing-hut of brown wood with warped sun-shutters, and a flight of blistering steps leading to the water. The little cliff was hollowed out into caverns by the tide, while over its brink hung creepers in long festoons.

The cabin was shaded by the leaves of a sea-grape tree. A clump of bananas, a hibiscus bush covered with crimson flowers, and some acacias kept company with the hut. As I floated in the pool I could watch a humming-bird busy with the blossoms of the sea-grape, and could follow the flight of many dragon-flies.

The sky above was the deepest blue, the sea beyond the reef was the colour of a pansy, while upon the reef itself the surf broke in a line of white. The sea within the reef was a wondrous green, and so clear was the water and so white the sand that in swimming one's shadow could be seen on the weedless bottom. In the distance, where the small cliff ended, there came a beach, curved like a sickle, with palms and impenetrable trees along the rim of the strand. The air was heavy with the smell of the sea, while upon the ear there fell no sound except that of the surf on the reef.

II.

SEVENTY YEARS AGO.

A JOURNEY to Barbados in a mail steamer of 6000 tons provides little to comment upon unless it be the grumbling of the passengers. There are always many to find fault. Some will complain that the ship goes too fast, or not fast enough. Others are aggrieved because the electric fan in their cabin hums like a giant bee, or because the grand piano is out of tune, or because quails are not cooked in a manner they approve of.

Those who are most ready with grievances may perhaps be appeased by an account of the journey from England to Barbados by mail ship as it was accomplished only seventy years ago.

In 1836 one William Lloyd,[1] doctor of medicine, started for Barbados with three male friends. They were simple tourists, travelling for pleasure, and, incidentally, for that improvement of the mind which was regarded as desirable in those days. The departure was from Falmouth, and the ship was the mail barque *Skylark*, Captain Ladd. She was lying in the bay, ready to start. It must be stated that the doctor himself commenced to grumble from the beginning. He complained that "the demand of the boatmen was half-a-guinea each—an excessive charge, allowed by the rules of the port." It cost the tourists, therefore, 2*l.* to get on board! The bulwarks of the ship were "forbiddingly high," so that it was impossible to look over. Those who desired to gaze upon the sea had to hang over the gunwale, like boys over an orchard wall. The poop was not safe for tourists, "having no defence at the sides."

[1] *Letters from the West Indies.*

There was one general cabin in the *Skylark* for all the passengers—to live in, dine in, and sleep in. It was so low that it was impossible to stand upright in it; moreover, it was dark. This was due at the moment to the fact that "the top of the cabin lights was covered with meat in a recently slaughtered state." No doubt, when the mail barque got away to sea the joints were removed and the blood-smeared panes of glass were cleaned. The tourists noticed also that "joints were hung around in various parts of the vessel, interspersed with cauliflowers, cabbages and turnips."

Now, in this low-roofed cabin, with the blood-dimmed skylight, there were only twelve berths provided. The number of passengers, on the other hand, was eighteen—*viz.* fifteen gentlemen and three ladies. Six of the party had, therefore, to shift as best they could during the month the voyage lasted.

When the ship was well in the tropics the doctor makes the following note: "Our nights are sad from the skylights being closed, the passengers who sleep on the table, on the benches and on the floor being afraid of cold from the night air." That cabin must have been little less than a torture-chamber. A fetid oil-lamp, swinging to and fro as the ship rolled, would reveal the sleepers on the table. The heat would be suffocating and the air thick with the fumes of the last meal, of stale wine, of tobacco, of damp clothes, and of eighteen perspiring human beings. Above the creaking of the bulkheads there would, no doubt, be heard the sigh of the tired woman who could not sleep, the gasp of the fevered man who wanted air, and the snoring of the heavy people on the floor. The passengers must have hated this too familiar, ever-frowsy "black hole," for it is needless to say, that in the mail barque of 1836 there was no smoking-room, no library, no music room, and, of course, no bath-room. When the weather was unfavourable there was nothing for the fifteen gentlemen and the three ladies to do but to sit below in the gloom, and like St. Paul, "hope for the day."

The doctor found the meals particularly trying. Upon this topic he writes as follows: "It is a trial to be long at dinner when

one is panting for breath; the right plan would be to dine off one dish and then away, whereas we have soup, then a wait for fish, then a long wait for a course of meat, then a tedious wait for a course of pastry, then a tiresome wait for the dessert, and long before that is finished we are wiping our foreheads." One thing is clear—there was no stinting in the matter of food on the good ship *Skylark*. The order of the day was as follows: coffee, 6 A.M.; breakfast, 8 A.M.; lunch, 12; dinner, 4 P.M., with coffee after; tea, 7 P.M.; and supper, 9 P.M.

The doctor remarks—and the remark is true to this day—"there is some temptation to eat and drink too much at sea." There was undoubtedly too much wine consumed on board the *Skylark*; so much, indeed, that it led to "headache and other feverish symptoms."

William Lloyd, however, although in common with his fellows he panted for breath whenever he found himself in that awful cabin, was disposed to make the best of things. The passage from Falmouth to Barbados occupied twenty-six days, from which it may be inferred that the *Skylark* was a good sailing vessel and had a strong N.E. trade wind behind her all the way. "We had a pleasant voyage," writes the cheerful doctor, "though our captain quarrelled three successive days with his sailing-master, who was at last put in arrest."

Captain Ladd seems to have had quite an ample idea of his position. At Falmouth he made his appearance before the passengers with a theatrical effect worthy of a leading actor. The barque was ready to sail, the last package was on board, the sailing-master was striding to and fro on the poop, all the passengers, eager to be away, were watching the shore for a sign of the great man who was to lead them westward. Just at the critical moment "the captain arrived in his cocked hat and uniform with the mails"—his Majesty's mails, no less.

The *Skylark* reached Barbados after sundown on the twenty-sixth day. At 10.30 P.M. "Captain Ladd, with his cocked hat and sword, hastened to pay his devoirs to the captain of the *Belvidere* frigate then in the harbour." The

eighteen passengers having witnessed the first act of this impressive ceremony retired to the loathsome cabin "for a last stewing," as the doctor puts it. While they were "endeavouring to woo a little hot sleep" Captain Ladd clanks on board again and arouses everybody with the news that "a fever was raging at Bridgetown." This choice information was probably yelled down the hatchway in a husky voice scented with rum.

The captain having dropped this bomb into the sweltering hole where the tourists lay, and having made them thereby perspire the more, no doubt divested himself of his sword and cocked hat and sank into sleep, with the happy sense of "something attempted, something done."

BARBADOS HARBOUR.

MANCHINEEL GROVE, BARBADOS.

III.

BARBADOS.

THE Royal Mail steamer reaches Barbados at daybreak. On the present occasion of her coming the sun had just risen, yet there was still a full moon shining, like a disc of steel, in the grey. The steamer crept to her buoy in Carlisle Bay, and by the growing light there could be seen an island of low pale-green downs, fringed at the water's edge by a belt of trees, with red-roofed, white-walled houses dotted between them. The green uplands were brakes of sugar-cane. There was no indication of a definite town; no evident landing-place. But for a few palms and casuarina trees, negroes in boats, and a number of bright-hulled schooners from "down the islands," the place might have been a bay in England.

As seen from the ship it did not fulfil the florid conception of the tropics nor the idea of a coral island.

Barbados is about the size of the Isle of Wight, and at the commencement of the seventeenth century it represented—with the exception of Newfoundland—the sole colonial possession of England. Indeed, in 1605, it could have been said that the empire of Great Britain beyond the seas was constituted only by a vague line of half-frozen coast and this tropical Isle of Wight, for the two represented England's insignificant share in the New World.

Barbados is the only West Indian island which has been English from the days of its beginning until now.

The manner in which it became a part of the empire is curious. In 1605 a certain Sir Oliver Leigh, of Kent, incited by tales of rich lands in the West, equipped a ship called the *Olive Blossome*, and sent her across the seas. In due course

the lumbering craft came in sight of Barbados, and the sailors, attracted by a sandy cove and shady trees, rowed ashore and landed on the beach. "Finding no opposition," these good men from Ramsgate, Deal and Dover took possession of the island in the name of their country.

The ceremony attending the annexation was unaffected. On the beach they put up a cross, to give the function a religious tone, while one of their number carved on the bark of a tree the inscription,

"James K. of E. and of this island."

The cross was probably made from the staves of a beer-barrel, and the graving on the tree, no doubt, was done by a dagger sharpened on a leather jerkin.

It may be imagined that when the ritual was over these pioneers of empire bathed—for the sandy shore would have reminded them of Thanet—chased the land crabs, or threw stones at the monkeys who still haunt this corner of the island. They then jumped into their boat, each with a handful of strange flowers, pushed off to the *Olive Blossome* and sailed away, for they were bound for the Main.

The annexation ceremony took place near to the spot on which Hole Town now stands (page 22), and compared with the pomp and glamour observed by the Spaniards on like occasions, the proceeding was little more than a schoolboy affair, a frolic of a party of Deal boatmen.

It may be said by some that Trinidad holds precedence of Barbados in the matter of annexation, for in 1595 "the Honorable Robert Duddely, Leiftenante of all Her Majestie's fortes and forces beyonde the seas," took possession of that island, with infinite solemnity, in the name of his Queen. He nailed to a tree "a peece of lead" inscribed with the Queen's arms, and an announcement in the Latin tongue. He caused, moreover, trumpets to be blown and a "drome" to be beaten. Unfortunately, the island was at that time in the possession of Spain, and in spite of the "peece of lead" continued a colony of that

State for long years after. Robert Duddely's affair was indeed little more than a common act of trespass, in which he was fortunately not detected.

It was some twenty years after the coming of the *Olive Blossome* that the first settlers made their home and built their log huts in Barbados. They sailed from England in a vessel named the *William and John*, belonging to Sir William Courteen. They made for the same sandy bay—by that time almost legendary—found the place of the cross and the writing on the tree. In a clearing in a forest near by they began the first town, Hole Town, erected a fort and made themselves masters of at least the west coast of the island.

Things, however, in Barbados were neither quiet nor well established for many years after Courteen's settlers founded their little city. For it happened in 1627 that King Charles, in a moment of incoherent liberality, granted all the Caribbee Islands (twenty-two in number including Barbados) to the Earl of Carlisle. Now, few of these islands were in the King's gift, and he might as well have presented the Earl at the same time with the Atlantic Ocean, the Equator, and the North and South Poles.

However, in July 1628, a confident body of settlers landed on the south of the island, under the protection of the Earl of Carlisle, and established another town, which they called Bridge-town, because they found there a bridge which the Indians had built across a creek of the sea. The bay in which they beached their boats is called Carlisle Bay to this present time.

As may be supposed, Courteen's settlers—being the old and original inhabitants of the island—thought so ill of this counter-enterprise, that they fell upon Carlisle's men and beat them grievously. Later on it transpired that the King, when in a previous island-scattering mood, had already promised Barbados to the Earl of Marlborough. Lord Carlisle thereupon approached the Lord of Marlborough and found that peer (who probably had vague ideas as to what and where Barbados was) most ready to forego all claims to the property in consideration of a sum of 300*l.* sterling paid in cash annually.

It may be conjectured that one party to this bargain sauntered down St. James's chuckling over the solid gold coin he had obtained for an estate as shadowy as Prospero's island, while the other hurried to his ship-master to assure him that at last—and for the paltry sum of 300*l.*—Barbados was his.

Yet scarcely had the money been counted out upon the Earl of Marlborough's table when Sir William Courteen forced himself into the lordly presence and pointed out, possibly with some emphasis and heat, that Barbados was *his*, and that he was possessed of it prior to 1627, at which time the generous King gave it away, with adjacent parts of the globe, as if it had been a mere *bonbonnière.*

Thus began squabbles to which the cudgel play in the environs of Bridgetown and "The Hole"—as the scoffers called the metropolis of Barbados—was a small thing.

Barbados is very densely populated. Its inhabitants number some 200,000, nearly all of whom are negroes.[1] The patriotism of the Barbadians is unbounded, and in these unsentimental days, is pleasant to contemplate. "They cling to their home," as Froude remarks, "with innocent vanity, as though it was the finest country in the world." If they do leave it, it is only for a time. Many of these loyalists have been attracted recently to the Canal enterprise at Panama by the high wages which obtain there. But the stay of the exiles on the Isthmus is short. They go thither in order that they may enjoy Barbados the better. The heavy toil and the hard climate are forgotten when they return to the island and can indulge—if only for one day—in the supreme luxury of driving through the town in a buggy, in a black coat and bowler hat, lit up by a necktie of fulminating colours. There will be then so wide a grin on the *ci-devant* navvy's face that the rows of white teeth can hardly hold the penny cigar. The anticipation of this one triumphal progress through familiar streets will have kept alive for months the germ of hope in many a labourer's breast at Colon.

[1] The population of the Isle of Wight is, by comparison, 82,418.

VIEW FROM ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, BARBADOS.

NEGRO HUTS, BARBADOS.

Barbados, too, is intensely and seriously English. "It was organised," writes Froude, "from the first on English traditional lines, with its constitution, its parishes, and parish churches and churchwardens, the schools and parsons, all on the old model, which the unprogressive inhabitants have been wise enough to leave undisturbed."

In the heart of the capital is Trafalgar Square, and in the centre of that square (just as in the Mother Country) is a statue to Nelson. London, indeed, may be said to have imitated Bridgetown in this particular, for the monument in Barbados was the first erected to the hero of Trafalgar. In defence of the English metropolis, however, it must be stated—and it is to be hoped without jealousy—that this rival statue is not impressive, while the famous mariner is made to look bored and jaundiced, although he is no longer "pea green" as he was when Froude saw him.

The city of Bridgetown is full of bustle, dust and mule teams, but it is not attractive. The suburbs, on the other hand, are beautiful—beautiful as only the outskirts of a town in the tropics can be. There are villas lost in ample gardens, avenues of palms, white roads barred by black shadows and made glorious by mahogany and banyan trees, by the cordia with its orange-coloured blossoms, by the scarlet hibiscus, by walls buried under blue convolvulus flowers, by over-stretching boughs from which hang magenta festoons of Bougainvillea. Here can be seen that most stately of all palms, the palmiste or cabbage palm, with such trees as the tamarind, the mango, the shaddock, and the curious frangipani, looking as bare as a plucked bird.

On the outskirts of the town, and indeed all over the island will be found in rows, in clumps, in halting lines, or in infrequent dots the dwellings of the negroes. These are tiny huts of pewter-grey wood, raised from the ground on a few rough stones and covered by a roof of dark shingles. They are as simple as the houses a child draws on a slate—a thing of two rooms, with two windows and one door. The windows have sun shutters in the place of glass; there is no chimney, for the housewife does her cooking out of doors in the cool of the evening.

Such is the original Uncle Tom's Cabin, scarcely changed these two hundred years. More picturesque little toy houses can hardly be imagined, but it makes one gasp to think how many human beings crowd into these tiny rooms after sundown, for the negro sleeps with firmly closed doors and shutters to keep out "jumbies" and ghosts, which are both numerous and trying in the West Indies, centipedes, which are ten inches long, snakes, vampire bats, and other horrors of the tropical night.

These fragile huts are those which are referred to in descriptions of hurricanes in which it is said that "over 3000 houses have been blown down, six villages have been levelled with the earth, and 10,000 people are homeless."

It is not uncommon to meet a house on the highway in the act of being "removed." It is placed on a cart flat-wise, like a puzzle taken to pieces, the four walls being laid one above the other as if they were pieces of scenery from a theatre. The roof is indistinguishable as such, the tiles are in the bottom of the cart, and while the owner of the residence will carry the front door on his head, other kind friends will assist with the window shutters, the doorstep and the fowlhouse.

About each tiny pewter-grey house will be the comfortable green of bananas and guinea-corn, a clump of rustling cane, with possibly a papaw or a bread-fruit tree to shade the threshold. In what may be called the policies are half-naked children, some fowls, a pig tied by the neck, or a goat tethered in like fashion.

The climate of Barbados in the winter is healthy and agreeable. The little island lies far out to sea in the very heart of the trade wind. That genial breeze blows steadily from November to May. To sit in a draught in scant attire so that a strong east wind may play upon the sitter like a douche is one of the chief objects of life in Barbados. The thermometer varies from about 76° to 82° F. There are no sudden lapses of temperature, none of that mean chill at sundown which falls like a footpad upon the sojourner in the Riviera. It is possible to be out and about all day. There is no need of any sun-helmet. The straw hat of the river Thames is all the head-covering required in this or any other West Indian

island. The badge of the raw tourist is a white helmet and a mosquito-bitten face. The one is as superfluous as the other when the management of mosquito-curtains has been learnt As a matter of fact, mosquitos and insects generally give very little trouble in Barbados.

The climate, as a whole, may be judged by the circumstance that the medical men of Bridgetown cling all the year round to the black frock coat and tall hat, which are the delight of the profession in Great Britain. The air is comparatively dry. The roads throughout the island are excellent, while the sea-bathing cannot be surpassed. The sky in the dry season is now and then clouded over, and there is occasional rain, two features which will be appreciated by those who have been wearied by the unfailing sunshine of the "cold weather" in India. The island has an excellent water supply, while both malaria and yellow fever are practically unknown. Barbados has had no experience of earthquake, it possesses no volcano, and the hurricane season is limited to the months of summer and autumn. The island, therefore, presents an admirable climate for those who cannot, or will not, winter in northern latitudes.

While on the subject of health matters, it may be noted that the West Indian islands still suffer—in spite of every care and of ceaseless investigation—very seriously from leprosy. The disease is limited to the "coloured" sections of the creole population, being rare in the white creole.

At Barbados is an excellent lazaretto, maintained by the Government. It is a model institution of its kind, and reflects great credit upon its medical chief, Dr. Archer. The lazar-house is situated by the sea, in a pleasant garden facing to the west. Around the garden is a very high and woeful wall, like the wall of a convent or a prison. Those who are within the garden are captives for life. All have had forced upon them a vow never to look upon the world again, for there is no way out to the high road except through the gate that leads to the burial-ground. It is a garden that sees only the setting of the sun.

All who walk its weary paths are condemned to die. There

is no ray of hope in the lepers' pleasance. The shipwrecked man on a raft may search, day after day, for the gleam of a sail, but on the horizon of these poor castaways there will be never a speck to be seen. The days are horrible in their mockery for they are nearly always sunny; the trees are bright with blossoms and alive with birds. The birds are free to come and go, are busy with their mating and the building of their nests. The men and women who hobble and sigh and curse in the shadow of the trees have no one thing to look forward to but a lingering death. If the days are hideous the nights at least bring forgetfulness and peace.

"How sweet to sleep and so get nearer death," must be the cry of each one of these lamentable outcasts.

If all were old and had lived their lives the fate would not be so tragic, but in this garden of Gethsemane there are budding maidens and sturdy lads. Among the newcomers I saw a girl of seventeen. She had all the freshness of perfect health, but certain loathly spots had appeared upon her skin, and then had come—the inquisition, the wrenching from home, the banishment to the house in the garden. She had, a week or so ago, such a life before her as is dreamed of by a girl of seventeen. She had a lover, perhaps, but now the iron gate of her Paradise has shut with a clang behind her and she is doomed to a slow rotting of the body, inch by inch.

She can see in the lazar-house, depicted with brutal candour, the future of her days. Her fingers will slough off like the hands of this poor woman who looks at her with such compassion. Her face will become hideous with toad-skin growths until she will be as little human looking as the dulled, distorted creature who sits on a bench waiting for the laggard end. She will change to a thing as repulsive and gargoyle-like as that horror in the corner of the ward whose sightless eyes can happily no longer see the vileness of her own deformity. The fresh young face will become the Medusa's head. She is looking at her forecast as if it were shadowed in a wizard's mirror—and she is but seventeen.

In the road beyond the garden wall can be heard the laughter

of those who pass by to the town, while within is being dragged out, act by act, one of the saddest tragedies of human life.

It was a relief to pass from the lazaretto to even such a haven for the helpless as the lunatic asylum. This is a new, admirably administered building under the competent charge of Dr. Manning. The best remembered feature in the asylum is an open quadrangle covered with grass. Around each side of it runs a low shed or verandah upon which open the barred windows of many rooms.

In this strange caravanserai are gathered a great number of insane folk, mostly negroes. In the centre of the quadrangle a grey-headed mulatto is kneeling in the sun and praying with breathless eagerness. He is a religious monomaniac.

A comparatively young man, sweating with excitement, and puffing out his cheeks like a dog who dreams in his sleep, is calling out that he is Lord Nelson, and that he wants boots. Lying senseless in the shade is a man recovering from a fit. Drooping on benches are listless melancholics, while among them is a man who sits bolt upright and for ever pats his hand to the moaning of some fragment of a song. A very cheerful being, squatted on the ground, is professing to make a hat out of grass roots collected with infinite assiduity. There are, besides, idiots and dotards and the absolutely mindless.

One figure amidst this nightmare crowd attracted my attention. He was a white man of about forty, with long fair hair. He was clad simply in a shirt and trousers. His feet were bare. He never ceased to walk round and round the shaded alley, persistently, laboriously. His lips were compressed, while there was a look of forlorn determination in his eyes. He had been in the asylum seven years. He was a Scotsman, and was reputed to be a sailor from Aberdeen. He had been left behind sick, and apparently dying, by a ship whose master had never called at the island again. Every effort to trace the man's friends had failed. Since he had been in the asylum he had never uttered a word, nor had he once replied to the persistent questions put to him. For seven years he had kept silence. For seven years he had tramped, day after day, round this walled quadrangle, picking his

way through the mumbling crowd. To what far-away goal he was travelling, along what endless road, amidst what horrors and under what crushing vow, who could say?

Here he was, a derelict; one of the "missing," one of those who had gone under. In some Highland village they may still tell how "Jamie" went to sea and was never heard of again, or how he was put ashore ill on a West Indian island and died there. He must have died, his mother will say, or he would have written or come home. He has never written; he will never come home, but will tramp, a lonely man, round and round this circle of purgatory until his foot falters and he stumbles into the dark.

IV.

THE INLAND CLIFF AND THE SEA BEACHES.

BARBADOS is a coral island. A coral reef encircles the greater part of its homely girth, its roads are made of coral of the whitest, while much of the stone of its houses has been fashioned by the coral polyp.

Those who know only the land around Bridgetown will say that the country is flat and monotonous, and that it consists merely of blinding highways toiling through tiresome tracts of cane and cotton, of cotton and cane.

It is true that the trees are limited to the wilds, to the villages, and to the planters' settlements, but there are downs of golden-green grass as well as hollows dappled with yams, sweet potatoes, and maize. Moreover, a hundred acres of rustling sugar-canes thrown into waves and eddies by the rollicking trade wind is no mean sight, while a field of sea-island cotton in bloom is, from afar, not unlike a thicket of Gloire de Dijon roses.

Towards the north of the island are hills, some of which rise to the height of 1100 feet. They are part of a great upland which is cleft, as by a hatchet, along its eastern side so as to leave a raw inland cliff, whose precipitous wall faces the Atlantic for many a mile. From any point on the brink of the escarpment a marvellous view extends. The most perfect prospect is from a spot called Hackelston's Cliff. Here, from a height of nearly 1000 feet, one looks down suddenly upon an immense leafy plain stretching away to the sea, upon a green under-world submerged fathoms deep in a blue haze.

The view is like a view from a balloon. On the flat are squares of pale green to mark the cane brakes, glistening splashes of holly-leaf green to show the bread-fruit trees, a waving patch of banana fans, dots of grey where are negro cabins, and now and then the curve of a white road shaded by palms. Beyond is the beach where the great purple combers from the ocean roll in to break upon the reef with a noise like the crack of a gun.

This little world lying at one's feet is shut in towards the north by miniature mountains, a range of dwarfed Scottish Highlands made up of diminutive peaks and ridges, of cols and valleys all glorious with every tint that grass in shadow and in the sun can give. From the crest of Farley Hill it is possible to look down upon this tumbled country as upon a contour map, and to imagine Ben Nevis and Lochnagar *en modèle*, with the tracks of tarns, the clefts of summit passes, and the cups of mountain lakes.

Near by Hackelston's Cliff I came upon a grinning negro lad who enjoyed an office most boys would have taken much to heart. He might have been called the "warden of the monkeys." At the foot of the precipice, in one of the few shreds left of the primeval forest, dwell a number of apes who creep up the cliff on occasion and make desperate raids among the bananas and sweet potatoes. It was the warden's duty to watch for the marauders, to spy them out as they peered over the brim of the cliff, to let them advance almost to the fields, and then to fall upon them with shrieks and stones and drive them over the precipice in jabbering disorder. It was with sincere feeling that the warden said "he liked his work."

Not far from Hackelston's Point is St. John's Church, one of the oldest churches of the island. It is a solid English-looking building, with a square tower, battlements and heavy buttresses. It stands on the very brink of the cliff, over-looking the same far-away flat and the same long lines of beach and reef. About it is a graveyard, facing seawards, full of ancient tombs, many of which belong to two centuries ago. More than one monument testifies to the deadly climate of times gone by, and tells of wives who died "in a moment" and "in the bloom of youth."

THE PRINCIPAL'S HOUSE, CODRINGTON COLLEGE, BARBADOS.

One tablet bears the following unusual inscription :

HERE LYETH YE BODY OF
FERDINANDO PALEOLOGUS
DESCENDED FROM YE IMPERIAL LYNE
OF YE LAST CHRISTIAN
EMPERORS OF GREECE.
CHURCHWARDEN OF THIS PARISH, 1655-1656.
VESTRYMAN 20 YEARS. DIED OCT. 3RD, 1678.

This imperial vestryman should sleep soundly, for the churchyard in which he rests is passing beautiful. Here fall the shadows of royal palms, of lofty crotons, of swaying casuarinas, of hibiscus bushes aflame with crimson blossoms. By the church wall stand Eucharis lilies, over the rusted railings fall jessamine and stephanotis, while between the gravestones are ferns and grasses and an uninvited company of homely flowers. During the church service, when all is still, there can be ever heard—borne by the trade wind—the muffled roar of the surf.

Far away to the north of the island, fifteen miles from the town, and on the flat between the inland cliff and the sea, is a dell full of trees. What lies hidden in this quiet oasis no stranger could guess. It can hardly shelter a planter's house as no sugar-mill chimney is in sight. There is no church spire to be seen nor is there, indeed, even a glimpse of a roof.

The visitor who follows the road into the wood finds himself in an avenue of palms. This avenue skirts a lawn and such a lake as may be found in many an English park. So far there is little that is amazing, but, sauntering in the drive, are some youths in college caps and gowns. As unexpected are these undergraduates as would be cocoanut trees in Oxford.

At the end of the walk is a solemn edifice of dull stone, severely academic, and not to be distinguished from the buildings familiar to an English university town. The place is, indeed, Codrington College (a college of the University of Durham), which was founded as long ago as 1710.

Opening upon the avenue is a stone cloister, through the pillared arches of which can be seen the Atlantic and the waves

breaking on the coral reef. In the shadow of the arcade is an English girl in white talking to a small parrot perched on her finger, and exciting by such speech the jealousy of a yapping dachshund at her feet. This lady of the porch is the principal's daughter. It would seem as if there had been transported to this far-away West Indian island a corner of a cathedral close, and when the organ in the chapel pours forth a hymn of the old country the impression is made magical.

The college chapel is exquisite—for its walls are lined with mahogany and cedar wood, while its benches are of that old type which recall the village church of bygone days. The marble floor has been cracked and scarred by the hurricane of 1831, which tore off the chapel roof and filled its aisles with wreckage. The library is stored with books of a kind one would hardly expect to meet with on a coral island—works on theology and conic sections, together with the writings of Sallust and Cicero, of Æschylus and Euripides. A pleasant sanctuary this for the budding scholar who will recall in after life that he first read the Odes of Horace under West Indian palms, and was disturbed in his imaginings of ancient Rome by the vagaries of humming-birds.

The college gardens are the most beautiful in the island, are vivid with the tints of tropical flowers, and hide, moreover, in their depths a swimming pool which is as the shadow of a rock in a weary land.

Hard by the college is the principal's lodge, the original Codrington mansion, which was built in 1660 and has seen and survived some famous hurricanes. It is a picturesque building of weather-worn stone with, in front of it, a stately loggia whose arches and columns are overgrown with ferns, woodbine, jessamine and stephanotis. Within is a doorway, flanked on either side by classic pillars worthy of an abbey, upon whose stones the sun and the rain of two hundred and fifty years have wrought tints of warm brown, while weeds have picked out the joints of the masonry with many a splash of green. The slaves who built this place may well have wondered at the magnificence of it.

MAIN STREET, HOLE TOWN, BARBADOS.

The founder of the college, Christopher Codrington, was "Captain-General of the Leeward Caribbee Islands." It was his wish that the school should be devoted to "the study and practice of divinity, physic, and chirurgery." In 1742 the original college was opened, and in 1875 was affiliated to the University of Durham. It has done admirable work, can boast a long list of distinguished alumni, and under the present able principal, Archdeacon Bindley, flourishes with persistent vigour.[1]

The shore scenery of Barbados shows great variety. On the north and east of the island the coast is wizen and rugged. Here are low cliffs of coral rock wrought into fantastic capes and hollows by the sea, or so gnawed at that a great gap in the bank has been in places bitten out. At Crane comes such a gap wherein is a gusty beach edged about with cocoanut palms and nearly filled with bushes of the sea-grape or with sprawling masses of creepers.

Here, as elsewhere, the sea assumes strange and unexpected tints; it may be violet, purple or maroon, with streaks of lettuce-green or forget-me-not blue, or may show a stretch of brilliant lustre such as shines on a beetle's back, or may shimmer into a lake of lapis lazuli. In calm days the water over the reef will be lilac- or even claret-coloured, or may take the hue of the nether side of a mushroom, while within the reef is that vivid green which can be looked down into from the stern of a steamer among the coiling eddies thrown up by the screw. It is indeed in these West Indian islands that

> The rainbow lives in the curve of the sand.

At Bathsheba immense curiously shaped rocks fringe the beach, so that the whole coast in this romantic part of the island is as the coast of Cornwall in miniature. Along the south and west borders of the island winds a quiet strand, with many a creek and cove. Certain of the curving bays are shaded by thickets of trees which crowd to the very margin of the shore. Some are

[1] See Article by the Venerable Archdeacon Bindley, D.D., in *Macmillan's Magazine*, December 1892.

inviting, modest-looking trees, which call to mind the orchard trees in England. They bear, moreover, a small green fruit, an apple, which might tempt a thirsty man. Woe to him if he yields, if even the temptress be Eve! For these are the manchineel, the poison trees; the shade they offer is tainted; their leaves will blister the skin; their fruit will turn to worse than ashes in the mouth; their innocence is feigned, for the orchard by the sea is an upas grove, shunned by every living thing except the land crab.

Nelson, in his early days, was made very ill by drinking from a pool into which some branches of manchineel had been thrown. In the opinion of some his health "received thereby a severe and lasting injury."

On the west coast is Hole Town, the most inviting little settlement in the island. It was once the capital of Barbados (page 9). It is now a lovable town of two tiny streets, sleeping out its life in a bower of leaves by the shore. A shop, a post-office, and a worn jetty represent the public buildings in this most unambitious hamlet. The two small streets open on the sea, on a smooth cove of biscuit-coloured sand. Trees line the whole sweep of the bay from cape to cape. They hide the half-forgotten town although it lies so near the water that when the west wind blows the spray will scud along the child-like boulevard. The beach is such an one as the sea seems to love, for each wave as it comes, lingers over it, fondles it, sweeping slowly up the smooth slope and dropping reluctantly back again.

An air of great leisure settles upon this lotus-eater's town. But few of its folk are to be seen. In the shade of the trees, at the edge of the shore, a solitary man is building a boat. There is such simplicity in his methods, and such scantiness in his clothing, that he might be Robinson Crusoe fashioning his canoe on the famous island.

On this very beach landed the inquisitive crew of the *Olive Blossome* just 300 years ago (page 8), and as the cove was then so it is now, the same inviting curve of tree-encircled sand, the same listless solitude. On just such a tree as stands

LANDING PLACE OF THE "OLIVE BLOSSOME," BARBADOS.

there yet the famous legend was writ, while here, within a halo of green, is a place well fitted for the wooden cross. Beyond the nodding town are low downs, so like some uplands in Kent that they may well have enticed the Englishmen to make a landing.

By the side of the high road a recently erected obelisk records the coming ashore of the boat and the annexation of the island; while on one of the postage stamps of the colony is a picture of the gallant *Olive Blossome* herself, with all her sails set and with the flag of England aloft on her poop.

V.

GEORGE WASHINGTON AND ANOTHER AT BARBADOS.

GEORGE WASHINGTON visited Barbados in 1751, when he was a lad of nineteen. He came over from Virginia with his brother Lawrence, who had developed a lung trouble, for which he was advised to try the West Indies. The journey across the Gulf of Mexico and along the Caribbean Sea occupied them a little more than a month. The two brothers stayed at a house overlooking Carlisle Bay, about a mile from Bridgetown, and owned by a Captain Crofton, the commandant of Fort James.

They had not been in the island more than fourteen days when George was laid low with the smallpox. The attack was not severe, but he bore the marks of the disease upon his face to the end of his days.

It was at Barbados that George Washington, for the first time in his life, visited a theatre. It pleased him. The play he saw acted was the austere tragedy of "George Barnwell." This drama was supposed to be of a very improving nature, and especially suited to young men. It pointed a moral boisterously and with as much directness as is employed in driving a pile into the solid earth. George Barnwell was an idle apprentice who, after robbing his master, passed through the various Hogarthian stages of vice, and finally committed murder, for which crime he was hanged. His last moments were peculiarly embittered by the reflection that his sweetheart was to be hanged at the same time, he having—as an item of his wickedness—led her astray.

During his sojourn in the island George Washington enjoyed the hospitality of the "Beefsteak and Tripe Club." He was introduced to this exclusive company by the judge of the High Court of Barbados. The members of the club met every

Saturday at one or other of their respective houses. Over the beefsteaks and the tripe the future statesman made the acquaintance of "the first people of the place." There seems to have been no meanness about the members of the club, and no stint in the matter of food or drink. George Washington, indeed, went away rather distressed by the spendthrift habits of his hosts, and by their luxuriant mode of living. A heavy dinner of beefsteaks, tripe and rum, held at three of the clock on a tropical afternoon, was a luxury for which the simple Virginian had little taste.

Barbados has welcomed many other illustrious persons besides George Washington. Nelson was for a period stationed in Carlisle Bay. His stay there was very irksome, for he was at the time in love with the pretty widow at Nevis. He chafed because he was kept so far away from her presence, and exclaims wearily in his letters, "Upwards of a month from Nevis!"—as if a month were a lifetime. He blamed the little colony for holding him from the arms of his Fanny, and took a sarcastic pleasure in heading some of his love letters "Barbarous Island."

Not a few of the natives of Barbados have attained to various positions of eminence, but among those who can only claim to have become notable, prominence must be given to Major Stede Bonnet. The major was among "the first people of the place." He was a gentleman by birth who had had the advantage of a liberal education. He was rich—being, indeed, "the master of a plentiful fortune." Naturally, he was much respected in the island, where he enjoyed all the privileges of a prominent citizen. Although the records are silent upon the subject, it is conceivable that he was one of the pillars of the little church at Bridgetown.

Some time in the year 1716 Major Stede Bonnet began to act strangely. He incontinently purchased a sloop, fitted her with ten guns at his own expense, and engaged a crew of no less than seventy men. This was very surprising to his friends as the gallant officer had no knowledge of the sea, while yachting was not then an accepted diversion for people of quality. It

was hardly to be supposed that a gentleman occupying the major's position would condescend to engage in commerce, and still more curious was it that, at this particular moment, England did not chance to be at war.

To all inquiries as to his intent the major merely answered "Wait." The mystery of the sloop was not lessened when the shipwrights began to paint her new name under the stern. Everybody went down to the careenage to spell it out, letter by letter, as it developed. The name was the *Revenge*.

By the time that the members of the Beefsteak and Tripe Club were talking of nothing else but the major and his vessel, the *Revenge* slipped out of Carlisle Bay, one very dark night, and disappeared into space. The sloop became the theme of the quay-side. Barbados had much to say about vanishing ships, while sympathetic neighbours who called upon the forlorn Mrs. Stede Bonnet had more questions to ask that lady than she was disposed to reply to. The more astute females of Bridgetown whispered that Mrs. Stede Bonnet had something on her mind. She had.

In a few months the awful truth reached the island. Major Stede Bonnet, the wealthy landowner, the respected and polished soldier, had become a pirate. The *Revenge* was cruising off America, taking prizes right and left. She had become the terror of New York and Philadelphia, for the major had the boldness to make Gardner's Islet, off Long Island, his occasional headquarters.

"This humour of going a-pyrating," writes Johnson in his "History of the Pyrates," "it was believed proceeded from a disorder of the mind, which is said to have been occasioned by some discomforts to be found in the married state." Things were beginning to be explained. The respectable matrons of Barbados gathered up their skirts and fell away from Mrs. Stede Bonnet when they met her in the streets of Bridgetown. They could not drink a dish of tea with a pirate's wife! They could hardly be constrained to sit in church under the same roof as the associate of corsairs. There were many friends of bygone days who now

owned that "they had never quite liked her," that they had always thought "there was something curious about her." Those among them who were of the sect of the Pharisees audibly thanked God that *they* had not driven their husbands "to go a-pyrating." There is no doubt but that the home of the Bonnets was broken up for ever. The major's grievances must have been very deep to have led him to give to his ship such a name as the *Revenge*.

In the meantime the soldier-pirate was not happy. He fell in with one Edward Teach, who is allowed by all connoisseurs to have been the greatest scoundrel who ever flourished in the buccaneering profession. Mr. Teach not only took the poor major into partnership against his will, but practically absorbed him, ship, crew and all. He concluded the distasteful alliance by robbing him of the more substantial of his possessions. This, as the Stede Bonnet biographer asserts, "made him melancholy."

The melancholia would appear to have marred the major's efficiency as a practical pirate, for he was captured off Carolina in 1718. He was taken ashore, but managed to escape in a canoe. So highly was he valued, however, that 70*l.* was offered for his arrest. He was finally seized on Swillivant's Island on the sixth day of November in the year named. He was tried at Charleston four days later, was sentenced to death and promptly hanged at a prominent place called White Point. It was Judge Trot who passed sentence on him, and it seems clear that this gentleman added great unrest to the major's last hours, for before disposing of the culprit he treated him to an address of such length that it occupies six closely crammed pages of print. In this discourse the learned judge improved the occasion by quoting very liberally from the Scriptures, and by giving fluent advice as to the leading of the Higher Life, of which same advice the major was to be so shortly prevented from availing himself. In this harangue, which is said to have been most impressive, Judge Trot made no allusion to that "disorder of the mind," or to those "discomforts in the married state" which led the major to seek refuge in the distractions of buccaneering, and which may have been advanced in some palliation of his offence.

VI.

THE ISLANDERS.

THE negro population of Barbados have learnt stern lessons on such subjects as the survival of the fittest, the effects of a generous birth-rate and the limitations of an island. They have crowded the fatherland to its brink, have grubbed up and tilled every yard of its surface, and have only left it when they have been practically pushed into the sea. They have become, by force of circumstances and against their natural inclination, both a hard-working and a frugal folk. They have learnt that patriotism and a clinging to home may mean both an empty stomach and a bare back.

Only of late years has the Barbadian accepted the inevitable, and reluctantly sought life elsewhere. There is now scarcely a quay on a West Indian island where the grinning Barbadian face will not be met with. They have migrated to America and have turned in thousands to Panama, whereby it has come to pass that labour is now not too plentiful in the colony, and the English housewife has begun to experience that dearth of good servants which has long been acute in England.

The negro in Barbados—as in other islands of the West Indies—is the descendant of slaves brought over from the adjacent coast of Africa. The days of their bondage are not so long ago, for slavery was abolished in English colonies as recently as 1834. Traces of old days are constantly to be come upon. Certain of the substantial little houses built for the "blacks" are yet to be found, while on all sides the products of slave labour are in evidence.

Turning over old island newspapers, one meets with such an announcement as this :

"58 Negro Slaves and 24 Head of Cattle for Sale,"

in the reading of which it is impossible not to be struck with the delicacy which places the slaves before the cattle. In the "Barbadian" for December 17, 1824, I noticed the following paragraph, which is bracketed with one dealing with the sale of "A Handsome Horse" :

"FOR SALE!

"A young Negro Woman, a good house-servant, with her infant child, two months old."

If the infant ever reached the age of seventy he would have been living in 1894, and, should he have had a child, the same might be flourishing on the island at this moment, possibly as a waiter or a chambermaid at the hotel. If he or she talked of "grandmother," it would be of this same young negro woman who was so good a house-servant, and who was offered for sale with the handsome horse.

The subjoined item from the "Barbados Mercury" of the date of August 4, 1787, is also of interest :

"Run away from the subscriber, a tall black man named 'Willy' : whoever will deliver him to the subscriber shall receive one moidore reward."

Now I take the moidore to be equivalent to the sum of twenty-seven shillings, therefore, Willy, in spite of his tallness, would have been little more in value than a pet dog. Indeed, I have seen the reward of two pounds offered for a runaway cat. It is much to be hoped that Willy never came back to the subscriber, but that he hid his pound and a half's worth of flesh in the jungle by the Inland Cliff and there ended his days in peace.

When slavery was abolished, Parliament voted a sum of money to be paid to owners as compensation for setting their slaves at liberty. The total sum thus expended in the salvation of men was nearly nineteen millions sterling. The number of slaves set free was no less than 770,280.

They were probably the only human beings who ever came to know precisely what they were worth, or what was their value in the eyes of others, for in the carrying out of the Act the value of each type of slave had to be defined with great exactness.

A first-class field hand was priced at £94, a domestic servant at £82. It may be imagined that many a dignified black butler, who appraised himself at, at least, £800, must have been hurt by this low figure. The vexation of the handsome negress who found that she was valued at some £2 less than her ill-looking co-worker must have been peculiarly bitter. Children under six fetched £13 17*s.* 4*d.* on an average. "Aged, diseased, and otherwise non-effective adults" were lumped together, like soiled goods at a sale, and priced at £10 8*s.* 5¼*d.* each. In this estimate of the value of a marred human life there is a lamentable pathos about the farthing.

Although the Barbadian blacks must have been compounded at the outset from different African tribes, it is remarkable that, by reason of their exclusiveness, they have developed into a definite race, with an easily recognised physiognomy and dialect. A head that is large and round and that is associated with an "open countenance" constitutes the "Barbadian head"; while the English the people affect to speak is the most curious phase that tongue can ever have assumed. To untrained British ears it is not intelligible, while even the cry of the children, who hold out their hands and grin "gimme a pension," needs to be explained as a demand for a penny.

The Barbadian negro is a fine specimen of humanity. The man may not be noteworthy, but the woman is a model of anatomical comeliness. She has well-moulded limbs, perfect teeth and the eyes of the "ox-eyed Juno." Her neck and shoulders belong to the women of heroic days, while the carriage of her head and the swing of her arms as she walks along the road are worthy of the gait of queens. She is as talkative as a parrot, her smile is that of a child at a pantomime, and without her the West Indian island would lose half of its picturesqueness. She is the life of the gaudy market square, while her black face may appear

almost beautiful when seen against the pale green background of a thicket of cane. She works hard and is strong. Her disposition is to carry everything, great or little, upon her head. Thus I have met an old woman bearing aloft on her skull a full-sized chest of drawers and not far behind her a young housewife with a slice of green melon on the black mat of her hair—an offering to her husband in the fields.

The normal costume of the negress is a frock of white, stiffened with cassava, and a white scarf or kerchief bound turban-wise about her forehead. Her woolly hair is covered by the linen cap, and as her white teeth are always gleaming—for she needs must smile—she forms a graceful figure sketched boldly in black and white.

It is curious to see in these dark faces classic types of womanhood which custom has made the European to associate only with a fair skin. Here, for instance, sitting on a cabin step, crooning over her baby, is a rapt Madonna in ebony. Leaning over a railing and swinging a scarlet hibiscus blossom before her lover's face is a coal-black Juliet, in an ecstasy of fondness. In the market place, in a vortex of violent speech, is a terrible virago with the seams of her features cut out of jet, urging her husband, a timid Macbeth, to avenge certain wrongs incident to the selling of yams.

Unhappily, the negress of Barbados is discarding her own charming costume in order to assume, with great seriousness, the attire of Europe. The result is deplorable, for so eager is the blackamoor to be done with the past that she becomes, in a sense, almost too European. Unconsciously she intensifies every feature of northern dress, making each item ridiculous. She caricatures the lady of the London parks, so that any who wish to see their faults displayed through the medium of exaggeration can have the distorting mirror held up to them in Barbados.

The coloured lady omits nothing. She holds her skirts in the manner of the moment, but, as the mincing mode is apt to be overdone and as clothing in the tropics is thin, the effect is often curious. Although accustomed to a blazing sun the whole year

through, and although her race comes from near the "line," the modern negress cannot be seen on Sunday without a sunshade which she will hold up even if the sky be grey. She must not fail to wear a veil, though no exposure to the eye of day can spoil her complexion or add a deeper tint to the shadows of her skin.

The chief difficulties in the way of perfect mimicry are anatomical, being dependent upon the waist, hair and feet. The European waist has been trained for centuries to follow certain lines of deformity, but the waist of the negress is that of the Venus of Milo and it resents the disfigurement very stoutly.

The hair problem is much more grave, and is indeed almost insurmountable. The astrachan-like wool on the black lady's head can be changed by no known art into anything that could be coiled or braided. The fight with the woolliness of wool in Barbados is desperate and discouraging. A young girl's hair is worked out into little tags which hang about her worried skull like black curl papers. These are intended to represent tresses, but although they could not deceive an infant they are diligently toiled at by ambitious mothers. By a bolder display and higher flight of art a bow is fixed somehow to the nape of the neck, to foster the delusion that it ties up raven locks. Some ingenious women have cut or carved out of the solid wool on their heads the figures of braided coils, just as a pattern is clipped out of a poodle's back. These carvings are made realistic by the addition of many combs which suggest that they prevent the "coming down" of hair which would not be ruffled by a hurricane nor disturbed by the thickest bramble bush.

There is an article of the European coiffure called a "slide," a species of brooch used to keep in order any wayward hairs about the nape of the neck. No self-respecting negress is without one of these controllers of stray locks, although in her case it is the hair that keeps the slide in place and not the slide the hair. Indeed there is more suggestion, more pretence, more fancy about the head adorning of a negress than about a Japanese garden.

The skull of the mulatto shows varying grades between wool and hair, and as the difference widens so does the brown woman

attain nearer to the standard of perfection. She becomes an object of envy, since a higher walk in life and a loftier social status may be reached by even three inches of reasonably straight hair. To the Barbadian, indeed, combs are more than coronets and lanky locks than Norman blood.

The foot problem is also serious. The negro having found no need for boots has wisely worn none, but as bare feet are *de trop* in Park Lane so they must not tread the coral paths of Barbados. There is no affectation about the feet of a negress, no pretence that they may be mistaken for "little mice stealing in and out beneath her petticoat." They are practical feet of serviceable size, but by some means or another, groans or no groans, they must be forced into cheap American shoes, and the graceful elastic walk must degenerate into the mechanical-toy mode of progress affected by the higher civilisation.

This attempt to be up to date involves such general suffering that it is not considered *démodé* with the smart set for a lady, when returning from a gymkhana, to take off her shoes and open-work stockings and carry them in her hands. I am told that in courts of law the manner in which evidence is given is apt to be affected by boots; so that an uneasy witness is often invited by the Bench to remove her foot-gear. If a bride faints at the altar, as is not uncommon, a sympathetic whisper runs through the assembly, not to "give her air" or "unloosen her dress," but to "take off her boots"; and when the operation has been carried out in the vestry the nuptials can proceed, although the young wife may never recover from the degradation of having been married in stockings.

If the negress must wear boots, she should wear them on the top of her well-balanced head. A pair of crimson satin shoes with gilded heels would look never so well as on the cushion of her woolly hair.

The black man has less wide fields for display than has the black woman. He is, however, strong in the matter of neckties, scarf pins and finger rings. He is strong, too, in waistcoats, which are at times so violent in colour as to be almost explosive. He

bases his model in dress upon a blending of Margate sands with the racecourse at Epsom. He cannot appear without a cigarette, nor without a cane which he carries like a Guardsman.

The West Indian negroes generally are a healthy, cheerful and sober people. Professional beggars are unknown among them, as also are "slum children" and the counterpart of the Whitechapel woman. The white folk who live in their midst are prone to say that the more you know of the negro the less you like him. He has certain estimable child-like qualities, it is true, but he is untrustworthy and idle, while his misconceptions of honesty and truth are inconvenient.

If left to himself he tends to degenerate, for the spirit of the wild has not yet died out of him. In up-country districts in any of the islands the black man is respectful to strangers, but in the seaport towns he is apt to be insolent when the opportunity offers. At Roseau in Dominica, for example, the quayside nigger would appear to have lapsed into savagery if the experience of certain ladies who recently landed there can be taken as an instance.

An account of the islanders would scarcely be complete without mention of certain other living things which serve to give character to the colony. Conspicuous among these are the black birds—the Barbadian crows. The full and proper title of these fowls is *Quiscalus Fortirostris*. They go about in companies, being very sociable. They are jet black and have white eyes. Their neatness and trimness are immaculate. They look like a number of dapper little serving-men in black liveries, or may be compared to smart vivacious widows with indecorous high spirits. Their curiosity and fussiness can only be matched by their unceasing energy. There is nothing that goes on in the streets or by the roadside which fails to interest them, while every detail of their lives appears to evoke an endless chattering.

The Barbados sparrow is another very sociable and pushing bird. He is greenish-grey in tint, but what he lacks in brilliancy of plumage he makes up in impudence. He comes to the early breakfast in the bedroom, hops on to the table or a chair-back, and if he is not served at once with sugar or banana will call out

petulantly like an old man at a club who is kept waiting for his lunch. He is a thief by conviction, and steals for the mere pleasure of stealing.

The sugar-bird is not so common as either of these two. Archdeacon Bindley, however, tells of his habits and of his ability to make himself at home. He drops on to the breakfast table as if he had been invited, and after he has helped himself out of the sugar-basin will, as likely as not, proceed to take a bath in his host's finger-bowl.[1]

Another flying thing is the flying-fish, which is as common in the fish market at Bridgetown as is the herring at Yarmouth. The visitor will eat him with curiosity at first, but when it becomes evident that no meal in the island is complete without flying-fish, under some guise or another, the novelty abates.

Finally, Barbados would appear to be that West Indian island which is favoured above all others by the land crab. His burrows are to be seen not only along the shore but by the side of every road that skirts the habitations of man. He takes up his abode in the garden, digs his tunnels in the environs of the house, and has turned more than one graveyard into a miniature rabbit warren. He is an unclean beast, his habits are nasty, and any contemplation of his precise mode of living is of a kind that makes the flesh creep. He appears occasionally upon the dinner table as an article of diet. I have eaten him under these circumstances, and the memory of this indiscretion is the only blot in my West Indian experiences. I feel that I have lost all right to criticise people who eat raw fish, snails, snakes and lizards.

The land crab, when he is fully grown, is about the size of the palm of the hand. In Barbados he is usually of a cherry-red colour, a tint which compels the impression that he is distended to bursting with unwholesome blood. He is shy—more shy than he was when Amyas Leigh and Salvation Yeo landed at Barbados on their journey westward. At that time he and his tribe "sat in their house-doors and brandished their fists in defiance at the invaders." He is agile, his legs are long and like stilts of tin.

[1] *The Pilot*, October 5, 1901.

When he walks he moves with a parched, scratching sound that is horrible to hear, and that suggests the fumbling about of a witch's nails.

I can imagine no more awful awakening than that which would befall the exhausted man who, having dropped asleep by the roadside or on the shore, woke to find these dry, crackling, carrion-eaters crawling about him as if he had been long dead.

A PLANTER'S HOUSE, BARBADOS.

A circle of Cabbage Palms.

VII.

THE PLANTERS AND THE POOR WHITES.

It is in Barbados that will be found the most substantial relics of the old West Indian aristocracy, of the planter prince who, in the days of slavery and dear sugar, held court in the island with all the pomp and circumstance of a feudal lord. Here, still clinging to the same broad acres, are those whose ancestors were among the early landowners in the colony. Such are Alleyne of Porters, Drax of Drax Hall, Carrington of Carrington. The son is educated at Eton and Oxford, as were his father and grandfather before him, and in the fulness of time takes up his abode in the old house—with a less princely income, perhaps, and with longer absences in the old country--but still as the hereditary head of an estate which has been associated with the name of his family for generations.

Most of these possessions date back to the time of the great Civil War, when squires who were loyal to the Stuart cause left England to seek peace, or to found a new home in place of the shattered hall and the wasted meads confiscated to the Commonwealth.

Those were spacious times when the lord of the great house would go to church in a coach and four attended by an escort of slaves in stiff-necked liveries, and when the lady would walk abroad through the estate with one black lacquey to carry her lap-dog and another her fan, while a third bore respectfully her case of simples if it was her pleasure to visit an ancient Uncle Tom or a sick Aunt Chloë.

A French missionary, one Père Labat, when he visited Barbados at the beginning of the eighteenth century, found the

island overflowing with wealth, the harbour full of ships, and the warehouses crammed with goods from all parts of the world. To his thinking the jewellers' and the silversmiths' shops in Bridgetown were as brilliant as those of the Paris boulevards. He noted at the same time, as a hint apparently to his ever-watchful nation, that the island was imperfectly fortified.

There are traces left of the ancient days in certain fine old mansions which, with no little architectural pretence, show as strong a leaning to the type of the English country house as the tropics will allow. One has gone to such servility in imitation as to possess fireplaces in its sitting-rooms. Some even are built of stone from England brought over as the ballast of brigs and barques that sailed from Plymouth. A few contain pieces of the heavily carved furniture of bygone days, huge presses, sombre four-post bedsteads, ample wine-coolers, semi-regal plate, with possibly old family portraits of staid men whose faces are wrinkled by many seasons of heat or seamed by the maws of irreverent worms.

The present-day planter's house is a solid building of plaster and stone hidden among trees and approached by an avenue of cabbage palms, of which the owner is proud. Around the house is an ample stone colonnade, or modern verandah, where on a table lies the favourite pipe. There is nowhere a stinting of space. The staircase is wide and easy of ascent; the inner walls are not all carried up to the ceiling, but the space is filled in with lattice-work to allow a free passage for the breeze. Every window is jealously sheltered by wooden blinds. The rooms are consequently dark, for the sun is an abhorred thing. Carpets are rare because creeping things are common. The sideboards are liberally wide because the West Indian planter is the most hospitable of men. The floors are polished like glass and as slippery.

Everywhere are there reminiscences of home. Here on the table are ancient magazines with curled-up leaves and torn covers. They have been read and re-read, but no one has the heart to throw them away or hand them over to be pawed by aliens, for they are sacred things. On a wall, stained by the

last hurricane of rain, is an insect-mottled drawing of the old house in England, a place with gables, a walled garden and a yew hedge. Below hangs a photograph of a college "eight,' with the planter himself among them as he was in the days of his youth, but the group is so faded that the lusty undergraduates have become mere spectral smudges, while the only thing that lives is the college shield, in still defiant colours. Of the portraits of the father and mother very little is left but the dots for the sitter's eyes put in in paint by a photographer who was given to realistic "touching up."

The dim room is, indeed, a room of ghosts. The cushions, the curtains, the coverings of the chairs are so wan and colourless, while the human occupants are so unsubstantial in the dull light that if the full flood of the sun were to pour into the room one can believe that its contents would vanish, leaving only the black butler in his white tunic grinning at the door.

The house and the piazza are covered with creepers; the grounds about them are rich with flowers of every tint. The kitchen garden is a jungle compared with the prim, brick-walled enclosure in England. In it flourish bananas and pumpkins, eddoes and peppers, pigeon peas, yams, ginger, chalots and sweet potatoes. There will be in a corner a few English herbs, despised by the natives, and possibly, if the owner be luxuriant, a patch of cabbages. The orchard boasts of mangoes and guavas, of avocado pears and golden apples, of shaddocks, sour-sop, and bread-fruit, of sapodillas, oranges and limes.

If there be a lady in the planter's house there is sure to be an English garden within sight of the windows of her room, where, tended with affectionate care, will be roses, nasturtiums and violets, or such other simple flowers as can survive the languor of the tropics. For this corner of the garden the negro has neither sympathy nor understanding, since he fails to conceive the object of growing anything that cannot be eaten or made into building stuff. I remember one such pleasance beloved above all by the lady of the place. The gardener was an ancient white man who, having been born on the island, had no opinion of the nonsense

talked about England, nor of the puny plants that came from that dim Mecca. Although he had lived with the family all his days he persisted in classing the cherished spot and all that grew within it as "bush." He declined to look after it. The violets and roses were affected weeds unworthy of an honest man's notice. His faith was in yams and in fruits as big as his head. To his mistress the meek little plot was a garden of memories, of "things from home"; to him it was mere scrub, a patch of wasted ground. It was not for the man of yams to know that the parent of the rose was still climbing over a familiar porch in Sussex, or that the violets had grown in a wood visited by a sorrowing couple the day before their ship set sail from England.

One addition to the planter's house remains to be noticed, and that is the hurricane wing. In the older buildings it takes the form of a strong round tower of two floors communicating with the dwelling-house. It has the massive walls and beams of a fort, the narrow windows and stout doors of a dungeon and the roof of a gun casemate.

Here, when the terror comes, crouch the women and children, while the wind hisses by like an arrow flight of invisible steel, slashing away the palms and trees as with a cutlass, tearing off the house roof and hurling it, with furniture, fencing, huts and plantation litter into the void. The women press their hands over their ears as the thunder bursts with a crash "as if the whole vault of heaven had been made of glass and had been shivered at a blow." The screaming children, who have dragged their toys with them, are blinded and silenced by the lightning which flashes through the window slits, and are then fascinated by the rain, which, pouring down as a weir, makes of the road a river and of the garden a whirlpool of mud.

Possibly the most interesting and remarkable of the islanders are certain dismal folk known as the "poor whites." It may be surmised that the "poor whites" are colonists who have fallen upon evil days through the common channels of disaster, drunkenness and sloth. There are such, no doubt, on the island, but they are not the "poor whites" of Barbados. These peculiar people are

A WEST INDIAN GRAVEYARD, BARBADOS.
The Silk Cotton Tree.

PLANTER'S HOUSE, SHOWING (ON THE RIGHT) THE HURRICANE WING.

descendants of some of the earlier settlers, of men who were colonists by compulsion, and who for centuries have enjoyed nothing but a heritage of woe.

They came to the island in the holds of unsavoury ships, a company of condemned men and women upon whom had been passed the sentence of exile for life. For some the period of banishment had been short, for they had died in the dark under the festering planks of the convict-brig, and were handed up from out of the stench by their friends to be dropped into the wholesome sea. Some were prisoners who were taken by Cromwell from the wilds of Ireland when he suppressed the rebellion in that gallant country. Others were the victims of the Civil War, who had been dragged from their villages by plumed and belaced cavaliers to fight, as they were told, for the King. The larger number, it would seem, were yokels who had taken part in Monmouth's rebellion, who had shouted for him on his landing at Lyme Regis, or had fought for him at Sedgemoor. They had passed through the Bloody Assize alive, had faced Judge Jeffreys from the dock, had heard his curses and had shuddered under the malignant venom of his eyes.

In the West Indian island the banished men had fared ill. Unfitted for work in the fields under a tropical sun, they had become dependents, loafers, doers of odd jobs and in the end mere squatters of the most dejected type. Pitied by the planter, held in contempt by the negro, without aim or object in the world, they had yet kept alive, with some rustic pride, the memory that they were white men. They married only among themselves, held aloof from the blackamoor and went their own way, such as it was.

Their number now is few, but they are a most distinctive people. Long intermarriage, long living in the tropics, long centuries of purposeless existence have left them utterly degenerate, anæmic in mind and body, sapless and nerveless, mere shadows of once sturdy men. The Briton in the West Indies clamours that he must go home from time to time or languish in health. These have never been home since the day when they were thrown out

upon the scorching beach to fare as they liked. They have withered and faded and, like a painted missal which has been bleached of all colour by years of sun, the writing that told who they were has become well-nigh illegible.

The poor whites are to be found mostly about Bathsheba, a joyless company of pariahs, housed in wretched huts and making a flabby pretence at living as fishermen. They own to names which are still familiar in Ireland and in the west of England. Some have marked Irish faces, and the doctor in whose district they live tells me that among not a few of the poor whites there still survives the pleasant brogue of Ireland.

Those who are descended from Monmouth's men are the offspring of ruddy-faced peasants who tended sheep upon the Dorset downs, or turned up with their ploughs the good brown earth of Devon. One can imagine how for years their talk would be of the hamlets they had left, of the cool trout streams, the shady spinnies and the old grey church whose bells they could hear in their dreams. It is certain that when each December came round they would babble—in spite of the never-flagging heat—of Christmas time, of the holly, of the snow on the uplands, of the carol singers and the squire's baron of beef.

The stories would come down to the sickly grandchild, to the still more listless great-grandson until at last the telling of such things as the keen English wind, the bare trees, the sheep fair and carrier's cart would become unintelligible and meaningless, while the names of Lyme, of Taunton, of Bridgewater, where the battle was fought, of Dorchester, where the assize was held, would be as the names of places that were not.

> What was once seen grows what is now described,
> Then talked of, told about, a tinge the less
> In every fresh transmission; till it melts,
> Trickles in silent orange or wan grey
> Across the memory, dies and leaves all dark.

VIII.

THE DAY WHEN THE SUN STOOD STILL.

THE most terrible day in the annals of Barbados was a certain Sunday of May in the year 1812. The night had been intensely dark, no star had been visible, while those who were unable to sleep heard mysterious sounds as of distant thunder or of the firing of cannon. The many who were restless or apprehensive that night were consoled by the thought that at six the sun would rise, and that with the daylight all uneasiness would vanish.

The clocks at last struck six but there was not a sign of dawn. The sky was still as black as a pall. The darkness was impenetrable. The white man crept out of his house and the negro out of his hut, full of fear and anxiously curious, yet hugging the thought that the clocks must be wrong, that it was really about midnight and that they would go back to bed again and laugh over the escapade in the morning.

The village street, however, was soon full of people feeling their way about in the gloom, moving nervously from cabin to cabin. When one man stumbled against another he would clutch at him and ask in a whisper what all this meant. Neighbours called by name to those they knew should be near, but in subdued voices. The white man groped his way to the verandah and down the steps into the garden, where, with arms outstretched, he felt about for familiar trees, stooping forward like a blindfolded man. The children were early awake and crying. The women lit candles in their cabins, but the glimmer made the murk more awful. The goat and the pig, that from habit had been let loose at six, crept into the welcome light and hid in the shadows of the small room.

Seven o'clock came but there was no sign of the sun. A sickening panic fell upon the distracted folk in the road. They had become aware that two other hideous things were added to the mysterious darkness. The trade wind—which never failed—had ceased to blow. There was a blank calm, a breathless stillness. The sound, too, of the surf on the reef had ceased as if awed into silence. More than that, something dreadful was falling out of the air. It fell without sound, a fine soft dust, that was already so thick upon the ground as to make the road unfamiliar to the bare foot, while the patter of men's steps sounded as if far away. It fell invisibly upon the outstretched hand, upon the woolly head; it clung to the brow; it dried the clammy lips; it clogged the staring eyes.

A man, silly with dread, began to joke aloud and to ask why they had all taken to getting up at midnight? Had they come to see the old year out? Before the poor gibe had died upon the fool's lips the meaning of the unutterable horror was realised. The jester had supplied the clue. To see the old year out? Was not this the last moment of all the years, the end of time, the last day?

Men no longer spoke in whispers. The silence was too unbearable. A woman's scream rent the air, "Oh God! Have mercy upon us." All restraint vanished. All now knew what the signs in the heavens meant. The end of all things had come. The sun would never rise again. This was the lull before the awful opening of the Day of Judgment. In a moment the sky would crack apart, there would be the brazen blast of the last trump, and God and his avenging angels would appear in the dome of heaven.

There came back to many the words of the hymn,

> Lo! He comes with clouds descending,
> Robed in dreadful majesty.

Here were the very clouds crushing down upon them. The sky touched the earth. They could feel the weight of it. Had not the Bible said, too, "He shall come as a thief in the night"?

Men and women rushed to and fro without purpose or control. The highway was filled with shrieking, crazy folk. They wrung their hands. They clung to one another aimlessly. They threw themselves down upon their knees and prayed. In the quaint language of the negro, in bursts and sobs, in yells and screams of terror, supplications were hurled against the sullen heaven. The black man is superstitious, he is emotional and excitable. His religion is very rugged, and daubed on his mind in crude colours. He called out to God as he would to the overseer standing above him with a whip. He was a sinner. He was to be scourged and damned. The flames of Hell were in sight. The appalling pictures of the Judgment Seat shown at the Sunday-school came to his mind. The devil with his horns and his pronged fork was waiting for him. He yelled, he clamoured, he whined for mercy.

Women broke out into fragments of hymns, and sung as sick folk sing in their delirium. Men dropped face downwards in the dust of the road gasping, "I am a sinner! I am a sinner! Have pity! Have pity!" Others, standing erect, held up their hands to the black cloud, and, as the tears made streaks of mud down their faces, called to God to spare them. How they abased themselves and grovelled! How they promised never to do wrong again! How they simpered and wept and howled!

The coward husband clung to the wife, believing that she would be saved, and that if he held on to her he might escape Hell when the sheep came to be parted from the goats.

One silent man was creeping towards the beach. He had stolen a knife some weeks ago. He held it in his hand. It must be thrown into the sea. It must not be found upon him when the Great Judge came.

An old woman was feeling her way to the graveyard. She reached the dust-clogged gate, opened it and went in. She sat down to wait. She knew that in a while the graves would open and that the earth would give up its dead. She was speechless with expectation, for all she held dear lay within these silent

walls. She would see her husband again, face to face, and her sons and her little girl. She thought over the many things she had to say to them all.

With the greater number the impulse was to hide, to run away, to be lost. They called upon the hills to cover them. They rushed into the thickets of cane, and casting themselves headlong among the great stalks put their fingers into their ears to keep out the sound of the trumpet call, all the while muttering prayers with their lips to the earth.

The velvety powder continued to fall. Many began to feel that they were being suffocated. There was no air. The dust stifled them. They tore the raiment from their throats and rushed about gasping, fighting with their hands the deepening cloud as drowning men battle with the waves.

Now and then there was a crash that made every heart stop and for a moment silenced every scream. It was a branch of a tree falling that had been bent to breaking by the weight of dust upon it.

Worse than that, dreadful birds flew by in the dark, and almost touched the shrinking crowd with their wings. Were these awful shapes portends and heralds of the Coming? They were great sea-birds whose wings and backs were so laden with dust that they could scarcely flutter. They had come in from over the sea, moving ever more and more languidly until their pinions were as pinions of lead.

The hours as they passed were struck upon the clock, but the tones were becoming huskier for the bells were covered deep with dust.

There was still the same impenetrable night, the same dead atmosphere, the pitiless silence, the falling film, the slowly-moving wearied birds.

At last, about the hour of one, those who looked towards the south saw a faint glow in the sky. It widened into a blood-red gap of light that stained the sea with blood and lit the clouds as smoke is illumined by flame. The horror, intensified by the rack of suspense, became inexpressible. The sky was opening!

The dread Appearance was at hand! In a moment the blast of the trumpet would shake the heavens and herald the Last Judgment. Those who saw the awful sight fled or hid their faces in the dust. Whether they ran or whether they fell where they stood, they pressed their hands over their ears in expectation of the coming sound.

But the silence remained unbroken. The crimson glare melted into kindly light. The darkness gathered itself up into a black cloud that hung suspended, like a clot, over the fields it almost touched. In a while it faded into a disc of grey and then vanished, leaving the island once more flooded by the sunlight of a summer afternoon. The trade wind blew again from out of the east, while upon the ear there fell once more the sound of

The league-long roller thundering on the reef.

The island was changed. The whole country was covered, to the depth of one and a half inches, by a soft grey powder, some of which can be seen to this day in the museum of Codrington College. A like dust lay thick upon leaf and bough, upon palm branch and cabin roof, upon the terrace of the great house and the deck of the brig in the haven. The sun had set over an island of green, it had risen on a land of ashes.

The people looked at one another shyly at first. Some laughed, since all their heads were grey and their faces powdered. Those who had hidden among the canes crept out and swaggered along the road to the village as if they were returning from a morning stroll. Some ventured to say how amused they had been, forgetting that the marks of tears were fresh upon their cheeks. Others were thankful that they had not made fools of themselves, until they caught sight of the patches of mud upon their knees and the weeds of the ditch in their hair.

The man who had thrown the knife into the sea repented of the act and resolved to dive for it at his leisure. The old woman hobbled back stiffly from the graveyard with the sense of a grievance in her mind and some mutterings of disappointment on her lips. The sea-birds—after eluding the cudgels of shouting

boys who were still hoarse with prayer—sailed away across the water with cries of thankfulness.

In the course of time a schooner cast anchor in Carlisle Bay bringing the news that on the day the sun stood still over Barbados there had been an unparalleled eruption of Mount Soufrière on the island of St. Vincent. Now, Barbados is ninety-five miles to the windward of St. Vincent, yet thousands of tons of dust had been carried noiselessly all that distance and had been dropped upon the palpitating colony.

The dust produced two effects—a temporary religious revival, and a permanent improvement in the soil of the fields, because it is said to have had good fertilising qualities.

IX.

A MYSTERIOUS SHIP.

FOR many and many a year in Barbados the cry of "A sail in sight" would send a thrill through the settlement. It was a cry which emptied the little school-house of its boys, impelled the shopkeeper to clap on his wig and hasten to the beach, and led the planter among the canes to stop and turn his pony's head homewards. If it was on a Sunday when the cry came it drew folk out of church, one by one, and hurried the droning sermon to a close.

Every ship, whether great or small, brought news, but it was often the smallest which carried the most weighty tidings—tidings of a French fleet bearing westward, of a sea fight off St. Lucia, of a derelict with dead men awash on her deck and the name *Mary of Barbados* under her stern. Every item of public news that ever reached Bridgetown had been bawled over the gunwale of some sea-weary craft to upturned faces in boats, while the anchor splashed into the bay and the cable rattled through the hawse-pipe. In this wise came the tidings, "The Queen is dead"; "All has been lost at Worcester"; "Nelson has blown them to blazes at Trafalgar."

So long as the sails of the formless ship were as a light in the haze she brought with her the very message that everyone hoped for and waited for. She brought money to the castaway, forgiveness to the prodigal, promotion to the war-tanned captain, and a summons home to the fretting subaltern whose heart had been left behind in a green rectory in Devon.

From the Governor to the lounger on the quay there was a period of anxious suspense until the watchman made out the

rig and cut of the on-coming craft. To the Governor it might mean advancement or recall, to the lounger the landing of a King's officer in search of a pirate who had turned wharfinger for a time.

On January 28, 1682, a ship was observed to be approaching Barbados from the south. She was apparently heading for Bridgetown, and was romping along with the trade wind on her starboard quarter. Curiously enough she did not seem to be in any hurry, for her lee sheets were handsomely eased off. Anyone who stood on the little cliff at St. Lawrence would have had a good view of her as she drew near to the reef. Her flag, in spite of rents and dirt, showed the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew. It was to be inferred, therefore, that she was British. She flew also another flag, a blood-red burgee decked with a bunch of white and green ribbons, which was a mystery to all beholders.

The ship was so wan, so weather-stained, so old as to be almost spectral. She may have been a ghost ship come to look into Carlisle Bay for the fleet of Columbus. The paint on her sides was ash-coloured. The tar had cracked away in blisters leaving bare the planks which were as yellow as a faded leaf. Her bottom, as she heeled over to the breeze, was green with weed and crackling with barnacles. Her sails, patched and ragged, hung about her masts like cerecloths, while many of her spars were splintered and "fished." She looked as if she had passed through a century of sun, wind and rain. She creaked like an old basket.

She was a galleon of some 400 tons, with the lines of a Spanish man-of-war, but the great house on the poop and all the carved work about the stern had been uncouthly hacked away, giving her the aspect of a ruin. She showed no guns along her sides, but there were ports for cannon on two decks, which ports had been closed and daubed over as if to conceal their existence. Across her stern, in letters of faded gilt, was her name. It was in Spanish and was a curious name—*The Most Blessed Trinity.*

If any could have seen her closer they would have noticed that the timbers about her rudder-post were charred. Someone had evidently tried to set her on fire. Her sides and bulwarks showed

many shot holes. She was leaking pretty freely, for a couple of men were cursing at the pump. The water that came out of her stank of rum, stale hides and sour wine. There were cutlass hacks along her gunwale, especially by the rigging, as if men had boarded her. The cabin door had evidently been burst in by a bloody shoulder for there was still a mark on the cracked panel. There was a trickle of dry and faded blood down the stair, and in the corner of the cabin, on the skirting-board, was a horrible glue-like daub with black hair sticking to it where a man, whose brains had been blown out, had fallen and died.

The craft held on her course until she "opened" Carlisle Bay. People on shore were hurrying down to the careenage to get the first look at this ancient, mysterious and weather-worn ship, which might have hailed from Cathay. The moment, however, that the ghostly vessel reached the mouth of the inlet she suddenly shifted her helm, and, with the tiller hard-a-weather, swung to leeward and sailed away towards the north. In a few hours she had vanished.

It would seem as if the captain of the gruesome ship had seen something in Carlisle Bay that had frightened him. But the haven was asleep in the sun. A few traders were lying along the quay near Bridgetown, while at anchor in the pool was a large frigate, H.M.S. *Richmond.*

The captain of *The Most Blessed Trinity* was no other than Bartholomew Sharp,[1] an acrid-looking villain whose scarred face had been tanned to the colour of old brandy, whose shaggy brows were black with gunpowder and whose long hair, half singed off in a recent fight, was tied up in a nun's wimple. He was dressed in the long, embroidered coat of a Spanish grandee, and as there was a bullet hole in the back of the garment it may be surmised that the previous owner had come to a violent end. His hose of white silk were as dirty as the deck; his shoe buckles were of dull silver. This was the companion of Dampier, Ringrose and Wafer, the hero of the "Dangerous Voyage and Bold Attempts of Captain

[1] Dampier's *Voyages*; *The Buccaneers of America*, by John Esquemeling, London, 1893; *On the Spanish Main*, by John Masefield, London, 1906.

Bartholomew Sharp." His admirers wrote of him as "that sea artist and valliant commander," but the captain of H.M.'s frigate *Richmond* knew him as a desperate and unconscionable pirate with a price on his head.

Sharp, with 330 buccaneers, had left the West Indies in April 1680. They landed on the mainland, and crossing the Isthmus, made for Panama. Having secured canoes, they attacked the Spanish fleet lying at Perico, an island off Panama city, and after one of the most desperate fights ever recorded in the annals of the sea they took all the ships, including *The Most Blessed Trinity*. Then followed a long record of successful pirating, of battle, murder and sudden death, of mutinies and quarrels.

In the end some of the desperadoes returned "home" across the Isthmus; but Sharp, in the *Trinity*, determined to keep to the ship, to sail the whole length of South America, to weather the Horn and to reach the West Indies by way of the sea. This was the "dangerous voyage" which had occupied eighteen months of unparalleled adventure, peril and hardship.

Barbados was the first point of "home" they had reached, so that any who saw the gaunt ship on that day in January saw the end of a cruise the like of which had never been. But for the glimpse of H.M.S. *Richmond* in Carlisle Bay, Sharp and his comrades would have been filling the taverns of Bridgetown with boisterous oaths, strange tales, and the fumes of rum. A warrant was out against Bartholomew, so he had to be circumspect.

The log of the "dangerous voyage" affords reading as lurid as the "Newgate Calendar." It records how they landed and took towns, how they filled the little market square with corpses, how they pillaged the church, ransacked every house, and then committed the trembling place to the flames. It tells how they tortured frenzied men until, in their agony, they told of hiding places where gold was buried; how they spent an unholy Christmas at Juan Fernandez; how, in a little island cove, they fished with a greasy lead for golden pieces which Drake is believed to have thrown overboard for want of carrying room. It gives

account of a cargo of sugar and wine, of tallow and hides, of bars of silver and pieces of eight, of altar chalices and ladies' trinkets, of scented laces, and of rings torn from the clenched and still warm fingers of the dead.

The "valliant commander" had lost many of his company on the dangerous voyage. Some had died in battle; others had mumbled out their lives in the delirium of fever, sunstroke or drink; certain poor souls, with racked joints and bleeding backs, were crouching in Spanish prisons; while one had been left behind on a desert island in the Southern Pacific.

When *The Most Blessed Trinity* started on her journey south she had on board two English surgeons. These gentlemen were, no doubt, kept well employed. They went ashore with the boats at Arica when the pirates made the attempt to seize and sack that town. As civilians they would take no part in the actual gun and cutlass business. The fighting on this occasion being much protracted the two surgeons took advantage of their enforced leisure to become intoxicated. When the pirates were compelled to retreat—for they were utterly routed—the two representatives of the healing art were bawling out the latest London songs on the floor of a deserted tavern. They were rudely sobered when they found their hands tied behind their backs and a Spanish fist screwing at their collars. Of all the prisoners taken these two learned men alone escaped being murdered; for it was believed that they might, when sober, be a comfort to the sick of Arica.

Captain Sharp, although the leader of so many "bold attempts," had not himself been free from certain domestic troubles during the voyage. They were mostly due to religion, or rather to the fervour of a religious revival among the ship's company. The crew became at one time so repelled by Sharp's lax morals, indifferent piety and utter disregard for the Sabbath that they could stand it no longer; so they seized him, put him in irons and dropped him down on to the ballast.

In his stead they elected one John Watling, an old and blood-thirsty buccaneer. He at once began Sunday services on board the *Trinity*, to the great comfort of the men. Bartholomew Sharp,

as he sat in the dark, on the damp stones with which the bilge was ballasted, could hear the music of familiar hymns rendered by hearty throats, a little husky, perhaps, from too much liquor. He could hear, too, and this would pain him most in his solitude, the fog-horn voice of the pious Watling "leading in prayer," or expounding select passages from the Holy Scriptures. Unfortunately, John Watling the revivalist was killed a few days later by a bullet through his liver, so his career as a Scripture reader was short.

During Watling's captaincy, Sharp, as soon as he had been lifted up from the ballast, did his best to appear before the company as a just man made perfect. Among some prisoners taken about this time was an aged Indian. He was questioned as to Arica, the town Watling was proposing to attack. His answers were judged to be false, whereupon the godly Watling, without further parleying, ordered him to be shot to death, "which was accordingly done."

This sentence was too much for ex-captain Sharp, who seems to have found grace while sitting on the stones in the bilge. He protested against the cold-blooded murder of the poor, untutored savage. Was he not a man and a brother? The voice of the tender-hearted Bartholomew faltered as he talked of the old man's little home, of his aged wife, of his devoted sons. The pleadings of this high-principled gentleman fell unfortunately upon deaf ears. Finding his counsel of no avail, Sharp drew himself up to his full height on the sunlit deck, and in a voice trembling with dignity and emotion, called for a basin of water. It was an unusual request, and as basins are apt to get broken on pirate ships the water was probably brought him in a battered salver stolen from a Spanish altar. Sharp at once proceeded to perform a rarely witnessed act. As a blear-eyed ruffian of a steward held the basin before him, he deliberately washed his hands in the not over clean water. Then, as he wiped his fingers on the lappels of his coat, he said solemnly, and with his eyes turned heavenwards, "Gentlemen, I am clear of the blood of this old man." It was a great and impressive ceremony—Bartholomew Sharp in the

character of Pontius Pilate—but it did not save the life of the wretched Indian.

It only remains to be said that *The Most Blessed Trinity*, after the alarm at Barbados, sailed wearily away to Antigua. Here some fourteen of the pirates landed, including Esquemeling, the historian of the "dangerous voyage." They secured a passage to England in the *Lisbon Merchant*, and reached the peaceful town of Dartmouth in March 1682.

Sharp, however, did not feel quite easy at Antigua. He was getting a little anxious about himself, and if he read Shakespeare must have often repeated the reflections of the boy in "Henry V." who said to Pistol,

"Would I were in an alehouse in London; I would give all my fame for a pot of ale and safety."

Sharp, therefore, moved on to the remoter colony of Nevis. In the little shy harbour of that island the poor, battered, friendless ship came to an anchor at last. Bartholomew was sick of the sight of her, so he handed her over to the piteous remnant of his crew, who had gambled all their loot and savings away and had not a penny to offer for their passage home.

As the "sea artist," in his gayest clothes, sailed out of Nevis on a homeward-bound merchantman he would have passed the *Trinity* lying at her anchor, dead-beat. He would have noticed her shot-riddled hull, her ragged sails, her rotting and too familiar decks. The warm breeze would have brought him a whiff from her open hold—a whiff of stale rum and staler bilge water. The odour would have reminded him of the days when he lay in irons below decks, listening to hymns. It may be that he waved his lace-ruffled hand to the poor, shirtless, unshaven gamblers who hung over her gunwale and who watched, through the tears in their eyes, the last of their comrades starting on their way to England and home.

X.

TRINIDAD.

AFTER a fortnight at Barbados the visitor would do well to follow the mail route again to the next port of call, Trinidad. The journey, which occupies some ten hours, is generally made at night, so that by the time the sun is well up the steamer is in the Gulf of Paria.

Trinidad is the most southerly of the West Indies, the island nearest of all to the Equator. It lies close to the mainland, being indeed but a detached fragment of Venezuela. The Gulf of Paria is the little sea shut in between the continent of South America and the wayward island, which same dissevered land seems to be stretching out its arms towards the mother country. Within those arms is the famous gulf.

Trinidad is not only a very beautiful island, but it is typical of the tropics and of the West Indies generally. It is a place, therefore, for a prolonged sojourn, especially as its roads are excellent, and the means of communication both by train and coast steamer are ample and convenient. There is just one drawback to the island, which even the generous hospitality and ready kindness of the inhabitants cannot make quite imperceptible, and that is the climate. It is hot, damp, and enervating, while the insects of the colony are rather overwhelming in their attentions to newcomers.

Seen across the gulf, Trinidad is an island of a thousand hills, of incessant peaks and ridges, and of a maze of winding valleys. From the sea margin to the sky line it is one blaze of green, the green not of grass but of trees. Trees cover it from the deepest gorge to the broken-glass edge of the highest peak. It is the

WEST INDIAN JUNGLE.

island of Lincoln green. Viewed from a long way off it would seem to be covered uniformly with green astrachan. Seen nearer one wonders if there can be a level road in the place, or indeed any road at all, and if the inhabitants can ever find their way out of the woods, so as to get a glimpse of the sky.

Here, at last, is the green of a West Indian island, a hoard a pyramid, a piled-up cairn of green, rising aloft from an iris-blue sea. Here is a very revel of green, clamorous and unrestrained, a "bravery" of green as the ancients would call it, a green that deepens into blue and purple, or that brightens into tints of old gold and primrose yellow. Here are the dull green of wet moss, the clear green of the parrot's wing, the green tints of old copper, of malachite, of the wild apple, the bronze-green of the beetle's back, the dead green of the autumn Nile.

From the Gulf of Paria can be seen the coast of the Spanish Main, and those pale mountains beyond whose heights lay El Dorado and the city of gold. The water of the gulf is dull. It is sullied by the great Orinoco river, for the mud that clouds it is washed from off the slopes of the Andes.

On a wide open flat, at the foot of the thousand hills, where the land has come out to breathe, is a cluster of buildings. This is Port of Spain, the capital of Trinidad. The town is not noteworthy. It has been many times burnt down, in which various fires the old Spanish houses and the rambling lanes have vanished, while out of the ashes has arisen a more and more precise city, laid out in mathematical lines, like a chess-board, with every street straight. No two houses are, however, alike. Some are of brick, a few of stone, some are of concrete and iron, while a multitude are mere shanties of wood.

The main thoroughfares are made up largely of wooden shops of two stories, scorched and warped out of shape by the sun, tinted with more or less decolorised paint and richly endowed with corrugated iron. The space of the street is encroached upon by arcades, by latticed balconies, by sloping sun-shutters, shop signs, palms and telegraph poles. Many of the buildings in the business quarter look as if they were only temporary structures and had no

claim to belong to an abiding city. The streets are glaring and steamy as well as a-rattle with electric trams, the overhead wires of which hiss, as if red hot, when the cars rumble by. There are trench-like gullies on either side of the road ready to be turned into torrents by the tropical rains.

No dogs in the world are so indefinite in the matter of breed as are the street dogs of Trinidad. They have lost all the characteristics of species, belong to no determined class and are simply "dogs."

Among the many curious objects in the streets of the place are certain loathsome birds called "Johnny Crows." They are greasy looking vultures with bare indiarubber necks, the cringing walk of Uriah Heep, Jewish beaks and a general air of nastiness. They dabble about the gutters in search of offal. When they are gorged they flap away to a housetop where they brood filthily. If a septic germ could be metamorphosed into a thing with wings it would take the form of a "Johnny Crow." Although these mean fowls are so disgusting to look at when they are limping about a midden-heap they are almost angel-like when they are seen high up in the blue heavens, wheeling in great circles round and round the city, as if with watchful tenderness.

The town folk of Trinidad appear to live mainly in the streets and to spend their days leaning out of windows or over balconies, for the climate is unfavourable to movement. So many nationalities are represented in the highways and byways of Port of Spain that it might have been on this island that the Tower of Babel was erected. There are negroes, mulattoes and "coloured" people of every known shade, French, Spaniards and English folk, East Indians in great multitude, Tamils, Americans, Venezuelans, Germans, a Chinaman or two, and a few anomalous beings who are of as uncertain species as the dogs and who would be classified simply as "men."

Although Trinidad has been British since the year 1797 it has by no means lost the evidences of its earlier occupation. Some of the chief families and landowners on the island are Spanish or French. To the same nationalities belong many of the most prominent

citizens. Spanish names abound over shop-doors and over many a gaudy tavern, while on the map of Trinidad it is the Spanish name that everywhere predominates. After the Spaniards the French made a struggle for a place on the map. They came with their *Baie Blanchisseuse*, *Pointe Sans Souci* and *Ilôt Saut d'Eau*. Finally some worthy Irishman managed to make his mark at one spot on the atlas with *Erin Point* and *Erin Hill*; but with these exceptions British names are very few. The black nursemaids, who chatter for ever on the seats in the park, talk in French, while the streets Spanish will be heard nearly as often as English.

The residential parts of Port of Spain and the suburbs generally are most delightful. On the outskirts of the town is a wide stretch of green, the Savannah, the delight and pride of Trinidad. This "level mead" is surrounded on one side by a semi-circle of many-peaked hills which are covered with trees to their summits. It is as if behind the open plain of Hyde Park there rose, as a background, the foot hills of the Himalayas. Casual paths wander across this great stretch of green, just as in any urban pleasure-ground, but there are features in the Savannah which would look curious in a London park. Among such are a clump of palms standing alone, the palings and grand-stand of a race-course, and, above all, a curious little old-world cemetery within a high wall. The enclosure for the dead is hushed by the shade of many trees, so that when the Savannah is made riotous by horse-racing or polo matches the cattle creep under the old walls and so find peace.

In a circle round the Savannah are brilliant villas standing in still more brilliant gardens where are the blood-coloured poinsettia, the blue convolvulus, the fan palm, lavish creepers of every tint, strange cacti like candelabra, and a very thicket of flowering trees.

It is in these pleasant places at sundown that the fire-flies are to be seen—curious little specks of light wandering in the shadows. There is a languor about their movement, a listless uncertainty in their flight, as if they were tired gnomes with lanterns searching for something that was never to be found. As

the amber yellow spark moves up through the purple it vanishes disappointed. It comes towards you through the grass, and when so near that you dare not breathe it dies away. The light-carrier seems to weary so soon, while the light, as if weakened by centuries of searching, seems hard to keep aglow.

The East Indians of Port of Spain congregate in an untidy suburb called Coolie-town. Here, surrounded by palms, bare earth, kerosine tins, goats, children and fowls, are lines of huts, some of mud and wattle, some of wood, some of corrugated iron. They are all of the packing-case or fowl-house type of construction. There are among them sickly-looking shops as well as companies of women bright with bracelets and rings who squat on the ground before baskets full of yams, bananas, oranges and salt fish. The place is as little like an Indian bazaar as China-town in San Francisco is like the alleys of Canton, but it is as full of strong colours and strong smells.

Everywhere about the suburbs will be seen the solemn tick bird, a black bird with a heavy hooked beak, a long tail and—as its name implies—useful habits. Everywhere, too, can be heard an irrepressible yellow-brown bird who spends its life in calling out, "Qu'est-ce qu'il dit?" Never in this world has a question been asked so often. The inquirer always lays great emphasis on the word "dit," sometimes adopting a querulous tone and sometimes a suggestion of remonstrance. The purity of the French varies with the individual fowl, but it seems to be generally spoken with an American accent. If a person were lying seriously ill in Trinidad I should imagine that the first care would be not to put straw down before the open window but to drive the "Qu'est-ce qu'il dit?" birds out of hearing.

The flying things, however, for which the island is most famous are the humming-birds. They were to be seen, at the time of my stay, in great numbers in the beautiful garden by Government House. They elected to come there between 7 and 7.30 in the morning. It was about this hour that the sun fell upon a certain bed of scarlet flowers to which they seemed to be devoted. They came from all sides, tiny winged wonders of blue,

green and gold, that for a moment one took to be great bees. They were so capricious, so alert, so quick as to be hard to follow. They sucked the honey from each flower while on the wing. They hung before the scarlet calyx in an ecstasy of worship, each little suppliant a whirl of green and gold. The vibrating wings could not be seen. There was merely a poised palpitating body with a dizzy halo on either side of it. Nothing could exceed the intenseness, the fervour, the exaltation of these little flower worshippers. It was not until they rested, with shut wings, on a spray near by that they turned to birds again. Thus, so long as the good sun shone each seemed to live

A loving little life of sweet small works.

XI.

HOLY ISLAND AND THE FORT IN THE WOOD.

It was on July 31, 1498, that the island of Lincoln green was discovered. The adventurer was Columbus who, with three ships, was making for the south on his third and most fateful voyage. He came, as heretofore, eager in the search for treasure. He followed that same will-o'-the-wisp whose light was ever to him a gleam of gold, and who led him all his days.

There was in his mind the belief that as he neared the Equator he would drift into a belt of great heat, where would be a burnt-up land, natives the colour of jet, and gold and precious stones in much abundance. He had pictured it all—the arid shore, the crackling scrub, the amazed black folk, the sparkle of gold in the scorching rocks, the glow of rubies among the pebbles. There had been some foretaste already of this fiery land, for on the way he had glided into a windless calm where the sea was as polished metal, with only a shark's fin here and there to tell that it was not solid, where the bewildered ships hung motionless with their prows turned different ways, where his men fell faint with the heat and blind with the whiteness of the light, and where the seams of the vessels gaped as the timbers shrunk in the sun. The water in the casks was nearly spent, while from the stifling hatch came up, like an evil steam, the reek of rotting meat.

The voyage had been the subject of many prayers, of many portents, of many vows, for to the treasure-seeker groping in the dark there was no hand to guide but that from heaven. The venture had been undertaken in the name of the Most Blessed Trinity, to whom was to be modestly ascribed whatever glory might befall its endeavour.

It seems to have been about the hour of noon when a servant, climbing to the mast-head for the fiftieth time, saw land to the west and yelled the news down to the deck. In a while the gazers from the poop saw rise out of the sea three mountain peaks united at their bases into one.

Here, in this vision of the three in one, was a wondrous miracle, an answer to months of prayer, an evidence that all the way the Holy Three had stood by the side of the unconscious helmsman. Thus it came about that the island was named La Trinidad.

At once all hands were called on deck for prayers and for the singing together of the hymn "Salve Regina." To many of the bareheaded crew this kind of chant was unfamiliar, for they were the sweepings of the jails of Castile. Still, with some heartiness the harsh song rose—together with the smell of putrid meat—into the blue of a tropical afternoon.

The three peaks were the "Three Sisters" which stand by the sea in the south-east corner of the island. As the shore was approached another wonder appeared. In the place of the arid uplands of the admiral's surmise was a wealth of soft, delicious verdure beyond all imagining.

Columbus cruised along the south coast of the promised land until he came to Cape Icacos, where he turned north through the "Serpent's Mouth" into the Gulf of Paria. While the ships were anchored in the entry of the channel by Cape Icacos, a great tidal wave bore down upon them with much foaming and roaring. Two of the ships dragged their anchors from the bottom, but the cable of the third ship parted so that the anchor was lost. In 1877, three centuries and more after this episode, an ancient anchor was dredged up off this very cape. It stands now in the garden of the Victoria Institute in Port of Spain, and there are those who have the boldness to state that it is the identical anchor lost that day in 1498, for it bears, without any apparent embarrassment, the title "Columbus' Anchor."

It was not until a day or so after making the land that any natives were encountered. They were found to be of even fairer complexion than those met with on previous voyages. Columbus

had apparently formed an idea of fascinating the savage by means of music, after the manner of the snake-charmer. He had on board for this purpose a band of musicians. They came from the Spanish seaport, and, as exponents of their art, might be represented at the present day by strolling fiddlers from the Yarmouth sands. The first natives who appeared were in a canoe, and seemed disposed to be very offensive. At once the artists were called on deck to put forth their charm. They commenced to play. The piece would, no doubt, have been the latest music-hall song of the time. The natives listened; seemed puzzled; stared at one another, and then with one accord discharged a full flight of arrows at the would-be sirens. The experiment had failed.

Many wonderful things happened on this voyage, but the most wonderful of all was this. On entering the Gulf of Paria some low insignificant land was seen on the south-west. Columbus, no doubt, scanned it steadfastly enough. He was gazing for the first time in his travels upon the coast of the great continent of America, but he knew it not.[1] He believed that the land he saw was an island—an insignificant island. He called it Isla Sancta. Thus it came about that the earliest name of America was Holy Island. A little later he caught sight of peaks on the mainland at Paria. He considered that they belonged to another island, whereupon, being in a soft religious mood, he named it the Island of Grace.

The three ships cruised round the gulf skirting the mainland. A party went on shore to formally take possession of the Island of Grace, otherwise America, in the names of Ferdinand and Isabella. Columbus never landed. Although only forty-seven years of age he was already an old man, and was at the moment much reduced by gout and a painful disorder of the eyes. So he stayed within his cabin and while he lay in his berth watching the ripples of the sunlit sea reflected on the deck above him he fell a-thinking. He was an imaginative man whose mind was alive with fancies, so he soon peopled the mean cabin with dazzling dreams. He had no thought of mere continents, no thought even

[1] America was first sighted by John Cabot in 1497.

of a continent greater than any yet known to the civilised world. His dream was more wonderful than all that. From certain signs and from subtle calculations he was convinced that in this very Gulf of Paria he had discovered the Garden of Eden. While he lay a-thinking, with his aching eyes closed, a smile would come over his face as he composed the phrases of that despatch which would announce to the pious queen that he had found the Earthly Paradise. His only idea now was to press on to Española so that he might send the great news post-haste to Spain.

One effect of the despatch, when it did arrive, was to cause an old comrade of Columbus, one Alonso de Ojeda, to start at once for Paria. He sailed thither, not with any hallowed wish to see the Tree of Life, but simply with the determination to make money, for the admiral had said that pearls were to be found on this shore as well as mementos of our first parents. With Ojeda went the Italian, Amerigo Vespucci, whom Filson Young speaks of as the "meat contractor."[1] They came upon a placid bay where the natives had built their huts on piles in the water. The little village reminded the Italian of Venice, so the place was called Venezuela, or Little Venice, which name it holds to this day.

Another curious outcome of this voyage was the circumstance that the vast continent itself come to be called America after this same Amerigo, the "meat contractor."

It was not until near about the year 1532 that the Spaniards undertook the colonisation of Trinidad. They succeeded so indifferently that the welfare of the island came in time to depend mainly upon certain energetic French settlers who landed at La Trinidad two centuries later.

In due course the inevitable British made their unwelcome appearance. It was in 1797. They arrived one day in February to the number of 8000 strong. Their ships blustered through the Bocas, jostling one another as they swarmed down the gap on the whirlpool of a tide. The Spanish governor was Don Josef Maria Chacon, a gallant man enough, but his garrison was so reduced by yellow fever, disaffection and long inactivity that he was unable to

[1] *Christopher Columbus*, by Filson Young, vol. ii. page 91 ; London, 1906.

oppose the eager host. So he set fire to his ships, sat himself down on the quayside and wept over his lost island. The English, under Abercromby, landed near Port of Spain and pushing towards the place took it with the loss of but one single man. A few shots were exchanged some two miles outside the town, but with this exception there was no resistance.

On Laventille Hill there is even now to be seen an interesting relic of this day when the British captured Trinidad. The green hill commands the town. It is steep of ascent, yet houses and gardens climb up nearly to the top of it, clinging on to any helpful ledge by the side of the unkempt road. On the apex of the height is a pale church, looking seawards, and near it a school-house where the droning sing-song of negro children seems to offer a sleepy answer to the brisk ever-repeated question of the "Qu'est-ce qu'il dit?" bird.

On this hilltop and entirely hidden by jungle is an old Spanish fort, the taking of which gave Trinidad to Britain. It capped the last height to be cleared, it marks the spot where the last surly man threw down his arms, it was the last fort to surrender. It represents the final hold that the failing fingers of Spain ever had upon the island of the Trinity. Here, in this little stone redoubt, came to an end a tenancy which had lasted just upon three hundred years.

The fort is hard to find, for the jungle has crept too zealously around it. It lies in the eternal shadow of green trees, while so overgrown is it with brambles that it might be a barbican of the Palace of the Sleeping Beauty. Like a secret rendezvous in a wood it is approached by a path known to few. This last stronghold of Spain, this redoubt of the dead, is a sturdy little place of grey stone, well and solemnly built. Its walls are of astounding thickness; its paved court, that once echoed with the clang of arms, is now a wild garden, a mere tangle of green, a court whose silence is broken only by the patter of rain and the song of birds.

It is interesting to think that this leaf-embowered fort was known to Picton, and must have been often and often visited by

him. Picton landed with Abercromby when he took Trinidad. He was left behind as governor with 1000 men. This was the heroic Picton who was Wellington's right hand in the Peninsular war, who conducted the siege of Badajoz, who was wounded at Quatre Bras (but told no one of his hurt), and who, two days later, was killed at Waterloo by a bullet through the brain, while charging at the head of his men. His portrait, in the National Portrait Gallery, is that of a grey-haired man, strong and alert, clean-shaven, with determined lips and most wondrous piercing eyes. If any were to seek a face which might be taken as a type of the British soldier it can be found in this portrait of Picton.

Picton left his mark in Trinidad. Even the road that leads down from the bramble-covered fort is called Picton's Road. He was a great and virile administrator who, like many others of his metal, was worried out of office by petty interference from home. Indeed, in 1803, he was arrested on a charge of cruelty perpetrated during his governorship. He was accused of torturing a miserable creature named Luise Calderon, in order to extort from her a confession respecting the robbing of her master. The trial of this woman had been conducted according to Spanish law, and the alcaide had begged the governor to allow him to have recourse to the "picket." Picton gave his permission. The "picket" consisted in making the prisoner stand on one leg on a flat-headed stake or picket driven into the ground for any time not exceeding one hour. Under this ordeal Luise confessed.

Picton was tried in England in 1806 and found guilty. A new trial was claimed, at the conclusion of which Picton was found to have acted without malice, but no judgment was delivered. In this bald way the incident ended. The people of Trinidad subscribed 4000*l.* towards the popular governor's law expenses, but a fire having broken out in Port of Spain a short while after, Picton sent all the money back to help those who had suffered in the disaster. Such is the man with whom the little stone fort on the top of Laventille Hill must be for ever associated.

XII.

ST. JOSEPH.

SOME seven miles from Port of Spain is the village of St. Joseph—as picturesque a little townlet as is to be found in the West Indies. It stands at the foot of the northern heights, just where they step out into the plain, so that it has behind it, ridge above ridge, the guardian hills, while in front is a rueful flat, the Caroni swamp, stretching away to the sea.

St. Joseph stands on a small green hill of its own, placed at the mouth of a gorge from out of whose shadows bursts the St. Joseph river.

The two streets which compose the village climb up the mound from two points, meet at the top, linger about a village green, a slumbering convent and a church, and then tumble untidily down on the other side. The town itself is nearly buried among trees and lost among gardens.

Here is a white-walled, brown-shuttered villa in a jungle of green, with nothing but a fragile paling to keep the bushes from straying into the road. Here is a cottage covered up to its red roof by a yellow creeper, then come a grove of bananas, a lean ascetic cactus, a merry clump of whispering acacias, more white villas, a few thatched huts, a solitary palm. There are shops in one street, but if the sun be upon them the shopkeeper and his dog will be both asleep, and if they be in the shade, well, then a counter is a comfortable thing to loll across and talk.

Life is not taken seriously in St. Joseph; there is ever present the conceit that its merchants are merely playing at shopkeeping, so that one would not be surprised to see Peter Pan and Wendy counting out oranges in one of the bright-coloured "stores."

A JUNGLE STREAM, TRINIDAD.

ST. JOSEPH, TRINIDAD.

It is always summer at St. Joseph, at this little "love-in-a-cottage" town. The villas, one might suppose, are occupied by happy couples who came here on their honeymoon and have never had the heart to go back to the world again.

Kingsley thought that if only there was a telegraph cable to the island "then would San Josef be about the most delectable spot he had ever seen for a cultivated and civilised man to live and work and think and die in."

The town may be small, yet the sense it gives of unbounded leisure is very vast; it may be lowly, yet the depths of its peacefulness are magnificent. It lies curled up on the top of its little hill like a purring cat in the sun. It may look up and stretch itself now and then on a gala day, but it will soon cuddle back into quietude again. This sleepy-head village, this happy-go-lucky town, this most lovable little garden city is no mere bucolic hamlet. It is called St. Joseph, but its right name and title is no less than San José de Oruna, the one-time capital of Trinidad.

It was founded by the Spaniards as long ago as the end of the sixteenth century. From this tiny hill the entire island was governed. From hence thundered forth commands at which the whole settlement trembled.

From hence came all the news of the world beyond the seas. It was a place that held its head very high, for upon the summit of the castle flew the proud banner of Spain. In the streets of the town, too, there once walked, clad in full armour and deep in thought, the romantic figure of Sir Walter Raleigh.

All the restless glory has long since passed away. San José de Oruna, the Versailles of Trinidad, has done with pomp and the burdens of authority. The twitter of birds and the rustle of leaves have replaced the trumpet blast, the tramp of armed men, the shuffle of obsequious feet. San José takes its old age very prettily and its retirement with idyllic grace. It is content to be the village of the love story, the place of the hushed garden, the city that was. It has no concern with the whirl of progress. Port of Spain is now the capital. There will be found plate-glass windows, electric tramways, rattling cars, yelling newsvendors,

telephones and tourists. San José is satisfied to doze in the warmth. Its past is unsighed for and its future unconsidered. It takes its motto from Sancho Panza :

There is still sun on the wall.

The village green of St. Joseph is a small open space on the slope of the hill, where it is shaded by a cluster of glorious trees. It would be called a savannah if it were not so petty and so very child-like. In the centre of this diminutive common are three stone graves, surrounded by iron railings. One is uninscribed, but the other two bear the names of officers of the 14th Regiment of Foot, who died respectively in 1802 and the year after. This calls to mind the fact that the English established a garrison at St. Joseph, and that the barracks, long since demolished, were by the side of this quaint, unambitious green.

There is a certain hideous memory associated with the military post of St. Joseph. In 1837 a number of the negro troops broke out into mutiny. They were led by a giant named Dâaga, a savage of superhuman strength and the ferocity of a tiger. It was on the night of June 17 that the inhabitants of the town were awakened from sleep by a sound like the roar of wild beasts. It was the war cry of some two hundred and eighty desperate helots. As men barricaded their doors, and women hid in cellars, they could see through the cracks of the shutters the red glare of burning barracks, and could hear the rattle of musketry and the rushing by of many feet.

The trouble was soon over. Dâaga was taken, but not until a host of his followers had been shot down by disciplined troops. Dâaga and two others of the ringleaders were condemned to death. Their execution remains a dreadful nightmare in the long daydream of this gentle town. It was on a morning in August that they died. On the hillside, close to the children's common, three graves had been dug in the red earth. The narrow pits faced to the east so that the morning sun fell aslant into them. On three sides of a hollow square stood the men of the 89th Regiment. On the fourth side were the graves.

The scene beyond the awful square was as enchanting as any in the world. The absolute silence was at last broken by the sound of men advancing to the music of the "Dead March." At the head of the procession three coffins were carried, then came the three mutineers in a line, with the giant Dâaga in their midst, still scowling, still defiant, still spluttering curses. The three were clad from neck to foot in robes of white trimmed with a deep border of black. In marching they kept step instinctively with the muffled drums. The sun threw long and ghastly shadows of them on the gorgeous green across which the white figures moved. Behind the three came the firing party.

Then, in a silence that was full of horror, the sentence of death was read. The chaplain stammered a prayer. Over the face of each mutineer a cap was drawn, but Dâaga pushed his up with an oath, and with the fury of a beast at bay. "Was he a child? Did he fear death or the thrice accursed English? No. He would die uncovered so that they could see to the last the hate in his eyes!" Men held their breath as the marshal's sharp words of command rang forth, "Ready! Present! Fire!" With the volley came the sound of three dull thuds on the earth, and then the rattle of the muskets was echoed back faintly from the smiling woods and the sunlit hills. Awed groups who stood expectant in the distant streets shuddered as though the echo had come from the nether world.

XIII.

EL DORADO.

FROM the summit of the hill of St. Joseph is a very wide view of the sea, and of the far mountains of South America. Seen through the haze of a cloudless noon, these mountains are pearl grey, unsubstantial and mysterious. Many have, no doubt, been fascinated by the prospect, but there was one Englishman, long years ago, who was absolutely transfigured by the contemplation of the scene.

It would not be unreasonable to suppose that Raleigh obtained his first clear survey of these mountains from the hill of St. Joseph. He had come from very far to see them; he had pictured them in his brain a thousand times as he brooded in his study at Sherborne. These were the uplands of El Dorado. Somewhere beyond the heights was the city of unfathomed wealth. It was all to be his and his Queen's.

He knew whereabouts the city lay, for he had studied many descriptions of it. He was learned in the fabulous geography of the land. He doubted nothing that he had read, and little that he had heard. He was as certain of the existence of the golden town as he was of the locality of Paris. He was as sure of its streets of gold as he was of the golden plain of buttercups in the meadows by Sherborne.

If the imaginative Raleigh could have seen into the future, as he gazed westwards, he would have beheld, in place of the spires of the wondrous city, a headsman's block in the clouds, for this very vision was to lead him to his ruin. He was lured once again to this fateful coast, but with his second coming his earthly voyagings ended. His sailing days were over. He had hoped,

when he turned homewards, to have laid the wealth of the world at his sovereign's feet, but his only welcome was from the crowd who waited in Old Palace Yard to see him die.

El Dorado was a daring fiction of the sixteenth century. The country was situated, so the fable said, in Guiana, between the rivers Amazon and Orinoco. It was rich in all kinds of precious metals, and ablaze with priceless gems. Its chief city was Manoa, a place of great size and magnificence, reared upon the banks of Lake Parima. This mythical inland sea was 200 leagues long. So engrafted was the figment of El Dorado upon the minds of men that the great lake Parima found a place on all sober maps up to the time of Humboldt. The houses in Manoa were covered with plates of gold. Temples and palaces were there of dazzling splendour, together with immense statues and thrones of solid gold. Indeed this metal seems to have been even too abundant in the city, for billets of gold were reported to be lying about in heaps in the byways, like faggots of wood stacked for the winter fire. There was also near the town a superb garden of pleasure, wherein was every imagined delight.

Numerous expeditions had been made to this surprising country before the time of Raleigh's coming, but, lamentable to say, they had all failed with more or less hideous disaster. One enthusiast of the name of Philip von Hutten believed that he had caught a sight of the golden city. If he did it was only in the delirium of fever, yet the fancy led on further hordes of stumbling men, who pressed forward to the phantom city until they fell dead by the way of arrow wounds, starvation or disease.

The chief authority on El Dorado was a Spaniard known as Juan Martinez, who declared that in 1534 he had spent seven months in Manoa with considerable enjoyment. Martinez was quite a simple man, a mere "master of the munition," yet his name will live for ever as that of the most fertile liar the world has known. He was conducted, he said, from Manoa to the Spanish frontier, blindfolded, but laden with treasure of every kind. Of this wealth he was robbed before he reached the coast. He had, therefore, no souvenirs of Manoa to show to his friends and

no precise knowledge to give them of the route to the city. On his way home he reached as far as San Juan in the island of Puerto Rico. Here in a hushed chamber he died, surrounded by all the comforts of religion.

It was when he was on his deathbed and "without hope of life" that he gave to the holy men about him his account of Manoa. This wonderful story fell from his failing lips after he had received the sacrament. Possibly the monks added a little to the tale; possibly it was wholly their invention; possibly they misconstrued the mutterings of the dying man altogether, as he babbled of a city of pure gold, of "a wall great and high" that was built of jasper, of streets that "had no need of the sun," of the river of life clear as crystal. It may be that the last half-whispered words uttered, when the world had already faded from his tired eyes, were such as these—"the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth——"

It matters little upon whom the mantle of Ananias may have fallen at Puerto Rico; the story, as it came to Sir Walter Raleigh, was after this fashion. About the year 1534 an expedition of 630 men set out to discover El Dorado under the leadership of Diego Ordas. In this company was Martinez the wonder-teller. The enterprise ended in rueful failure; Ordas was murdered and nothing—not even a nugget of gold—was discovered. During the unhappy journey Martinez incurred the wrath of his leader to such a degree that Ordas turned him adrift in a canoe to sink or starve as he liked. Martinez, as he glided down stream in the empty boat, was captured by Indians in a manner approved of in every tale for boys. The natives took him to Manoa as a curious creature they had caught in the woods. He seems to have been exhibited as a freak, as if he had been a bearded woman or a two-headed ox. Whether he was shown in a booth sitting on those gold billets which were so common in the town, or whether he was invited to parties and bazaars to amuse the smart people of Manoa matters little. He saw all there was to be seen and treasured every astonishing item in his mind.

He seems, as a man of taste, to have had a curious concep-

tion of what constitutes "the height of luxury." This realisation of supreme bliss was to be witnessed whenever Manoa was honoured by a state banquet. On such occasion, says the soldier of fortune, "all those that pledge the Emperor are first stripped naked and their bodies anointed all over with a kind of white balsam. When they were anointed all over, certain servants of the Emperor, having prepared gold made into fine powder, blow it through hollow canes upon their naked bodies, until they be all shining from the foot to the head; and in this sort they sit drinking by twenties and hundreds, and continue in drunkenness sometimes six or seven days together."

There are still people who regard the prospect of being drunk for a week as the consummation of happiness, the Nirvana of their ambition, but they are people of the baser sort. These gilded youths and men of Manoa who rolled about the palace for a week, giggling and hiccoughing, and leaving greasy dabs of gold on the marble as they lurched from court to court, were generals and governors, privy councillors and ministers of state. It is a quaint idea of an earthly paradise—the nakedness of the Garden of Eden, gold dust and grease as at once a concession to modesty and a token of magnificence, the unlimited drink, the presence of the king. The only reasonable feature in the picture is the severe simplicity of the court dress.

Raleigh left England with five ships in February 1595 to discover this pleasant country of Juan Martinez. The year before he had dispatched a respectable pirate, one Captain Whiddon, "a man most honest and valiant," to Trinidad to collect information. Raleigh, on his arrival, after examining the shores of the green islet and visiting the Pitch Lake, anchored off San José de Oruna. He determined to take that town and to capture Berreo, the governor of the island. His excuses for the assault were the following: In the first place Berreo had treacherously captured eight of Whiddon's men; secondly, he had treated the natives with vile cruelty, had loaded certain princes with chains, and then tortured them by dropping boiling fat upon their bare shoulders. The third reason, however, was the real one. Berreo

had already led an expedition into Guiana, and would no doubt be full of useful knowledge.

Sir Walter therefore went ashore one dark night, crept up the Caroni river, and took San José at the break of day, just as the humming-birds were busying themselves in the governor's garden. He found five melancholy princes chained together in a row and nearly dead from famine, while on their royal backs were the remains of the last application of hot fat. He set fire to the little town, and went down the hill happy and chuckling to himself, for he had Berreo with him, alive and communicative.

Raleigh left his ships at Trinidad and crossing to the mainland in small boats proceeded to ascend the mighty Orinoco. There was never a more romantic river voyage ; never a more rapturous wild-goose chase. Raleigh was infinitely gullible. He believed every word the romance-loving Spaniards told him, as if he had been a gaping schoolboy. He trusted Juan Martinez as a modern traveller trusts Baedeker. He gathered inspiration and assurance from any dull-witted Indian who nodded "yes" to the unintelligible questions of his interpreter.

Every sign was a happy omen. He toiled up the fetid, pestilential river radiant with delight. His men died of starvation and fatigue, but Manoa was ever just beyond the next bend of the stream. Ten more strokes and the first golden water-gate would be in view. His boats were rotting, yet he could hear every night the bells ringing in the spires of the gorgeous city. Whatever he came upon was delightful. "I never saw," he writes, "a more beautiful country . . . every stone that we stooped to take up promised either gold or silver." The birds that flew over the dismal stream were the most lovely he had ever known : "birds of all colours, some carnation, orange tawny,[1] purple, green, watchet,[2] and of all other sorts both simple and mixed." He met with no kind of encouragement, and yet the smile of delight never left his face. Once they came upon a kindly chief who entertained them in his village ; upon which happy occasion "some of our captains garoused of his wine till

[1] Orange tawny was Raleigh's own colour. [2] Pale blue.

they were reasonable pleasant." This was the best time they had experience of.

At last even Raleigh could go no further. His men were listless with the heat, parched with fever, and so utterly weary that even the prospect of lying drunk for a week in a tavern of gold failed to stir their jaded muscles. They could not pull another stroke in this lukewarm river. They could scarcely sit upright on the scorching thwarts, and would have given the whole land of El Dorado for one hour of a keen north-east wind blowing over the downs of Dorset.

Raleigh owned to no failure. When he reached home he spoke of Manoa as if he had seen it. He writes that the country would yield to the Queen "so many hundred thousand pounds yearly as should both defend all enemies abroad and defray all expenses at home." He implores his "Lady of Ladies" to put forth her hand and grasp this land of untold riches. He even ventured to assert, with the precision of an auctioneer, that one of the famous statues in Manoa could not be worth less than 100,000*l.* When he turned back on the river it was with no sense of lack of success. Writing cheerily, and in his same pretty manner, he merely says, "It is time to leave Guiana to the sun and steer away towards the north."

Poor self-befooled Raleigh, he left more gold in this miserable country than he ever brought away from it, for he gave to any loquacious chief who would listen to his babblings an honest English sovereign—a piece of "the new money of twenty shillings with her Majesty's picture." It would have indeed been well for the gallant dreamer if he had left Guiana for ever to the sun.

XIV.

THE HIGH WOODS.

So prodigal in the tropics is the growth of all things green that if the good folk of Port of Spain were to march out of their town on a certain day and not come back again until five years had passed they would find the place lost in jungle, the familiar streets blocked with undergrowth, the tram-lines faint streaks in the moss, and the church hidden beneath creepers.

A drift of luxuriant green, some fathoms deep, covers the whole island, silting up the valleys, making level the ravines, and bridging over each smaller river so that it creeps through the shadows like a snake. This wealth of green pours down from the hills into the town, "a waterfall of leaf and glowing flower." It penetrates everywhere, through the outskirts, like a lava stream. It trickles into the very streets. It is hard to keep it at bay. Let a road be closed and in a while it becomes a meadow of weeds. Let a garden be deserted and it at once relapses into the savagery of a tangled wood. There are no bare places in the tropics. Even the rock that stands up like a bleached bone will find some kindly leaf to cover it.

The country around Port of Spain is eminently beautiful, a wonder of valley and peak, of purple shadows, of soft gullies full of blue haze, of splashes of brilliant colour. Looked down upon from a height it is the country of an epic, the land of the primeval romance, majestic, solemn, unconfined. Here is an unclimbable crag covered with trees to its summit, not with lean pines or starving larches, but with the pampered trees of a summer wood. On its height should be one of those precipice-walled, many-turreted castles that Gustave Doré loved to draw. Here is a valley, like the Maraval valley, where the road roams through

TRASH HUTS ON THE EDGE OF THE HIGH WOODS, TRINIDAD.

a tunnel of bamboos, where the path is strewn with flowers as if a procession of gallants had just passed by, where the stream by the wayside is so domed with foliage that the noise of its water on the pebbles seems to come from underground.

There is many a mountain pass in Trinidad. Of the view from the summit of one of these Kingsley has written in this wise: "We were aware, between the tree-stems, of a green misty gulf beneath our very feet, which seemed at the first glance boundless, but which gradually resolved itself into mile after mile of forest, rushing down into the sea. The hues of the distant woodlands, twenty miles away, seen through a veil of ultramarine, mingled with the pale greens and blues of the water, and they again with the pale sky, till the eye could hardly discern where land and sea parted from each other."[1] By the sea is often a windy beach along whose sands a line of lanky cocoanut trees will stretch away for miles. They ever wave their arms in the breeze as if signalling to someone at sea. In a stifling bay, where the water is still, and where the very shadows are stagnant, is a mangrove swamp. The roots of the tree are as the meshes of some cunning net, its tentacles grope seawards like the arms of an octopus. From the mud it spreads in will bubble up a fetid gas with a sound like the gurgle of drowning men, while the sludge it covers is alive with slimy things.

There are still in Trinidad wide tracks of uncultivated land where flourishes "the forest primeval." This is the country as it met the eyes of the first adventurers, the pathless jungle which so fascinated Charles Kingsley that he writes reverently of his first visit to the High Woods (as these forests are called) "I have seen them at last"!

It was near Sangre Grande, under the kindly guidance of Mr. Lickfold, that I made my acquaintance with the High Woods. The world-old jungle is almost impenetrable. Those who would traverse its perplexing depths must follow the method of the early explorer, and hack a way through with a cutlass. So compact is the undergrowth that no trace of the ground is to be seen. For

[1] *At Last: A Christmas in the West Indies*: London, 1871.

all one could tell the mass of verdure may, like a sand-drift, cover the ruins of cities. Out of the tangle of green rise huge spectral trunks, struggling to reach the sky to breathe, struggling to rid themselves of the web of creepers, vines and parasites which cling to them and drag them down, as the snakes did Laocoön. Ropes forty feet long dangle from the topmost boughs, and it only needs Jack-o'-the-Beanstalk to climb them and tell of the wonders to be seen upon the sunny side of the great canopy of leaves that shuts the daylight from the world.

There are church-like aisles hung with festoons of lianas as if with rags of votive banners which had fluttered there a century. Aerial bridges of creeper-stems swing up aloft from bough to bough over chasms laced and wreathed with an entanglement of green. There are violet-black gaps in the palisade of trees which reveal unimagined depths. In many a dark arbour in the bush some West Indian Merlin may have lived, while the golden auriole that darts out of the shadow might be the spirit of the dead magician.

In this drowsy land the air is hot, heavy and stifling, "breeding," as Raleigh says, "great faintness." Were it not for the brilliant butterflies and moths that glide to and fro one would imagine it was too dense with damp for winged things to fly in. The dim green light is as that of moonlight. The sounds in the woods are strange, for the leaves are strange and their rustling is unlike that heard in any English spinney. The cords that are dropped from the skies, like the strings of an Æolian harp, must utter still more unwonted notes whenever a wind finds its way into these steamy shades. Through the dancing haze, through the languorous vapour that fills the forest as with the smoke of incense, through the fume of dead leaves there comes ever a strange hum of life, the drone of insects, the rustle of the darting lizard, the flutter of hurrying wings.

The vegetation of the tropics is profligate and extravagant. A West Indian jungle shows to what excess the libertinage of leaf and stem may reach. Everything in this spendthrift forest is immoderate and exaggerated. The undergrowth is to a man

what a plot of weeds is to a hiding mouse, or what the woods of Brobdingnag were to Gulliver. Here is a creeper that covers half an acre. Here is a plant like a violet in its form, but it would shelter a child. Here is a geranium leaf, but it is shining and stiff and measures two feet across. This bush might be made of parsley were it not so magnified that it rises to the height of many feet. This thicket suggests a clump of bracken, yet such is the size of every fern-like fan that it would hide a dozen horsemen. These woods of Munchausen, these gardens of the megalomaniac are very wonderful, but they are wearisome by their persistent intemperance and parade.

I think that the most beautiful tree in this part of the world is the *Bois Immortel.* It is found in the cacao plantations, where it shades and shelters the cacao bushes. Hence its name "Madre de Cacao." In the cool weather the Immortel becomes bare of leaves—a rare occurrence in the tropics. Its stem and boughs being grey they look, as they stand out of the green thicket, wintry and dead. Suddenly, so it seems, the whole crown of the tree becomes covered with marvellous blossoms, with delicate flowers of coral red or ruddy orange. This mass of palpitating colour lifted aloft in the sun against the blue sky is a marvel to see. The name is not to be wondered at. The skeleton tree rises from the verdant earth like a figure of death, and when it seems utterly withered, a blush of radiant petals covers its barrenness and so it breaks into life again.

Before leaving the High Woods I am reminded that a lady of Sangre Grande showed me much of that beautiful country and, amongst other things, a new cemetery of which the village folk were proud. She told me that the first body buried in this ground was that of a coolie baby whose parents had adopted Christianity. Coffins being costly the dead child had been placed in a deal box in which tinned milk had been shipped to the island from Europe. As the sorrowing relatives shuffled round the grave, the lady noticed that there was an inscription upon the lid of the would-be coffin. On looking closer she observed that it read, in heavily stencilled letters, as follows : "Stow away from boilers."

XV.

THE FIRST WEST INDIAN TOURIST.

THE first British tourist to the West Indies was undoubtedly Robert Duddeley, Earl of Warwick and Leicester, Duke of Northumberland, Knight of the Garter and, in a general way, "Leiftenante of all her Majestie's fortes and forces beyonde the seas." [1]

He went like other tourists primarily to enjoy himself and to see new lands. Incidentally he did a little pirating on the way, but only as an amateur. He indulged in piracy in a proper tourist spirit, and not with any idea of making money by the pursuit. He no doubt felt that on this particular trip it was the right thing to do, just as the winter visitor to Norway feels compelled to take to ski-running. In the same mood the tripper in Egypt wears a tarboosh and allows himself to be shaken into a jelly on the back of a Bank Holiday camel.

It may be said at once that Robert Duddeley, as a pirate, had little sport. The only Spanish vessel he fell in with on the voyage out hoisted English colours, and escaping into shallow water jeered at the tourist ship and taunted the crew with mockery and depraved language. "The which," writes Captain Wyatt, who commanded the pikemen, "our generall toke mightelie offensive."

The pirate duke had every reason to be annoyed with these coarse, low men, for his grace was proud and very dignified and ceremonious. For example, when his ship approached a strange vessel to do battle Wyatt says that they always "caused the collers[2] of our countrey and of our generall to be advansed in the topps,

[1] From the admirable reprints of the Hakluyt Society.

[2] Colours.

poope and shrowdes of our shipp." More than that the "trumpetts" took up their place "on the top of the master's cabbin." Anyone looking down from the poop would have seen "every gunner standinge by his peece." On the poop would be the noble duke himself, in his best armour, with the ribbon of the Garter across his chest, a baton in his mailed hand and plumes in his helmet. After all this parade it is no wonder that his grace considered it mightily offensive of the Spaniard to get out of harm's way and then grin over his bulwarks at him and indulge in contemptuous laughter and obscenely expressed chaff.

Robert Duddeley, like the present-day tourist, started from Southampton at the commencement of the holiday season—viz. in November. This was in the year 1594. On November 6, according to Captain Wyatt, "hee caused his shippinge to disanker from the Rode afore Hampton." The "shippinge" consisted of the *Bear*, the *Bear's Whelp* and two small pinnaces named the *Frisking* and the *Earwig*.

On the return journey, by the bye, they did not make their port with the precision of a mail steamer, for they "fell by reason of most extreme mistie weather in with a fisher towne called St. Jiues in Cornwall."

The *Bear* reached Trinidad on January 31, 1595, and dropped anchor in Cedros Bay, some distance south of the Pitch Lake. The experiences of the tourists during the first four days of their sojourn in the island are worthy of record.

On February 1, a Saturday, they sent a boat ashore to confer with the natives. The conference was satisfactory, for "the daie followinge, being Sondaie, in the morninge came the salvages with two canowes aborde us." They amiably bartered food for beads and fish hooks and no doubt for hawk's bells. Now it so happened that one "salvage" could speak Spanish. It was unfortunate, for it led to trouble. The mischief began when the accomplished native told the duke of a gold mine along the coast. Although it was Sunday the general must needs send Captain Jobson and others ashore to see this property. After trudging eight weary miles in the sun Jobson came upon the ore and brought some of it

back in his pocket. The mineral was bronze-yellow in colour, and the duke, after he had eagerly handled it, pronounced it to be fine gold. Their fortunes were made.

It may here be stated that the nugget the happy tourist gloated over and locked away in his velvet-lined cabinet was a specimen of marcasite, a form of iron pyrites about as valueless as road metal.

After a sleepless night, devoted to the contemplation of the high calling of a millionaire, Robert the tourist resolved to take possession of this gold mine which Providence and the "salvage" had placed in his hand. He did this, as he did all things, with the utmost ceremony. On Monday morning he landed in full armour with all his soldiers. As he placed his ducal foot upon the beach the men drawn up along the shore fired "a vallew of small shot," to which the *Bear* in the offing respectfully answered "with ten peeces of the great ordenance." The troops were then paraded and inspected, as is still the custom when royal personages land upon strange soil.

The march to the mine commenced. It was a solemn procession. The duke in person led the way. With him was, no doubt, that "salvage" who had the gift of tongues, and who was probably secured by a rope round his neck. Unfortunately, the route was by the margin of the sea, through very soft sand. It was a march to be remembered; a tramp along a furnace-hot beach which gave way under each step, with the noonday sun of the tropics overhead and not a scrap of shade as wide as a man's hand to temper the glare. One can see the staggering figure of the leader, clad in glistening mail too warm to touch, with a helmet on his head, and in his heart a pride so great that he dared not lift the casque from his shoulders. He must have dripped like a leaky iron tank as he stumbled along, and if prickly heat seized upon him while he dragged one heavy foot after the other out of the sand he cannot but have felt that the way of millionaires is hard. The journey was little better than a penance, although they trudged along cheered by "the noyse of trumpetts and drome."

At length, writes Wyatt, "having marched VIII longe miles through the deepe sandes and in a most extreame hott daie, our Generall, unaccustomed, God he knows, to walke on foote, leading the march, wee at length came unto the place wheare this ore was, and havinge placed our courte of garde in a convenient place and sett forth our centronells, all the rest were appointed to the gatheringe of ore."

That gathering of ore must have been a sight worth seeing. They may in after years have thought of it as wool-gathering, but, for the moment, the wool was the Golden Fleece. Purple-faced men, who had been talking of flagons of beer all the way, forgot their thirst, forgot even to mop their streaming faces, forgot to shake the sand out of their shoes, and falling down upon their knees proceeded to stuff their pockets with this paltry stone. To the envy of the "centronells," who stood motionless in sight, they would hide lumps of the yellow rock in their doublets, drop pieces down their necks, slip fragments up their sleeves, until they must have rattled like a boy's bag of marbles.

Every piece was an item in a fortune. This lump would buy for one pimply soldier the village alehouse and the cider orchard. This handsome lad, who had jammed a particularly fine piece of rock into his breeches, felt assured that it would enable him to marry Dolly when he landed at Hampton, where he and she could live happily ever after. One fragment of stone was to make an old mother comfortable, another was to pay for a boy's apprenticeship, a third would buy a comrade out of prison, while every nugget meant some comfort and ease for the rest of each man's journeying. What a day of dreams! What a building of castles in the air! A crowd of crawling, scrambling men all grubbing up happiness with their hands, all finding in the dirt their heart's desire, all radiant that the world was well with them at last.

Poor perspiring, finger-sore simpletons, they would have been better engaged if they had been picking up lumps of coal. Still, the joy kept with them until they reached their homes. Then came a drama, grim and oft-repeated, the tragedy of the gold-

smith's shop, the nugget dragged proudly out of the much-handled pouch, the smiling sweetheart on her lover's arm, with visions of a happiness beyond imagining, the guffaw of the goldsmith who would give a groat for a cartload, the weeping girl at the closed gate of Paradise, and the cursing soldier hurling a yellow stone into the stream.

In the meanwhile things were not quite comfortable at the gold mine. The tide had come up and covered the track, so there was nothing to do but wait for the ebb. "Our generall," says Wyatt, "peceavinge a most filthie miste to fall, caused an armefull of boughes to be cutt and laide on the grownde, wheraeon he himself lay downe; over whome Ancient[1] Barrow helde his collers,[2] and Wyatt made his stande rownde about him." Lord Duddeley must have been grateful for this rest, as well as for the opportunity of removing his armour so as to rid himself of those insects which still trouble visitors to Trinidad. It must have been a picture to impress the "salvage": the peer recumbent in the silent forest with his stockinged feet projecting from under his cloak, with the family banner held over his head by a yawning ensign, while the guard stood around, their figures bulging at every point with blocks of iron pyrites.

The distinguished tourist had not been long asleep when the "centronells" raised an alarm, and in a moment all was confusion. The valiant general sprang to his feet, and "with xx shott" rushed into the treacherous woods to seek the cause of this disquietude and panic. It proved to be due to a firefly. Wyatt thus explains the position, it being only necessary to add that the firearm in those days was discharged by a glowing match or fuse: "For theare is a certain flie which in the night time appeareth like unto a fire, and I have seene at the least two or three score togeather in the woods, the which make resemblance as if they weare soe manie light matches, the which I perswade myselfe gave occasion of some soden feare unto the centronells which gave the alarum."

Probably there was no more sleep for anyone after this, for

[1] Ensign. [2] Colours.

when the tide went down the party marched back to the ship in the cool of the dawn.

Nothing now remained but to take formal possession of the mine. This was accomplished on the very Tuesday on which the gold seekers returned to the ship. Robert Duddeley did not undertake this duty in person. He had had enough exercise for the moment. Another walk, in the sun, of sixteen miles in full armour through soft sand was almost more than any gold mine was worth. So he stayed on the vessel, and no doubt had his breakfast in bed. He did not, however, spare either his officers or his men, as Captain Wyatt's account of the solemn function will show. "This morninge, beinge Twsedaie, our Generall caused our Queenes armes to be drawne on a peece of lead and this inscription written underneath, the which was sett upon a tree neare adjoyinge unto the place wheare this myne of gold ore was discovered." The inscription sets forth in Latin and at great length that "Robertus Duddeleius, Anglus, filius illustrissimi comitis Leicestrencis," etc., had descended upon the island and had taken it in the name of that most serene princess Queen Elizabeth.

The General entrusted the carrying out of the ceremony to old Captain Wyatt. Furthermore, he handed to the captain his own sword, as a sign that that officer had authority to act in his general's behalf, "joyninge with him in commission Mr. Wright and Mr. Vincent." These three gentlemen, full of bustle and importance, landed once more on the blazing beach, and taking with them a formidable body of troops, started again on the purgatorial journey of sixteen miles.

"Marchinge forth in good order," writes the cheerful Wyatt, "wee came unto the place wheare this our service was to be accomplished, the which wee finished after this sorte: first wee caused the trumpetts to sownde solemlie three severall times, our companie troopinge rownde; in the midst marched Wyatt, bearinge the Queenes armes wrapped in a white silke scarfe edgec with a deepe silver lace, accompanied with Mr. Wright and Mr Vincent, each of us with our armes, havinge the generall's collers

displaid, both with the trumpetts and the drome before us, after the chiefest of the troopes, then the whole troope, thus marchinge up unto the top of the mounte unto a tree the which grew away from all the rest, wheare wee made a stande. And after a generall silence Wyatt red it unto the troope, first as it was written in Latin, then in English ; after kissinge it hee fixed it on the tree and havinge a carpender placed alofte with hammer and nailes readie to make it faste, fastned it unto the tree. After wee pronounced thease wordes that 'The Honorable Robert Duddeley sonn and heyre unto the Right Honorable Robert Earle of Leicester, etc., etc., doth sweare, God favoringe his intent, to make good against anie knight in the whole world.'" No knight having responded to this challenge the proceedings concluded by more sounding of the trumpets and the drum and a general yelling of "God save our Queene Elizabeth."

There is no doubt that it was an imposing function, made especially brilliant by the sunlight of the tropics. The men, I suppose, were in some such costume as is preserved in the present uniform of the Yeomen of the Guard. Captain Wyatt and his colleagues, Mr. Wright and Mr. Vincent, would be in shining armour, while it is sure that "the collers," as they waved in the breeze, made a bravery against the azure sky. There would be many flies buzzing in the air, the land crabs would come to the mouths of their holes and stand there in amazement, while the pelicans in the bay, unnerved by the sound of the trumpets and drum, would cease from their fishing. It may be surmised that the "salvages" who peeped out of the woods were much interested in the purple-faced "carpender" who, hanging over a bough head downwards with his mouth full of nails, was doing such strange things with the "peece of lead." I expect that some agile "salvage" took down that piece of lead as soon as Duddeley's ships were out of sight and sold it to the first pirate who was looking about for something to melt into bullets.

THE SHORE NEAR THE PITCH LAKE—AN OUTCROP OF PITCH ON THE BEACH.

XVI.

THE PITCH LAKE.

THERE are some things the traveller finds it hard to avoid. Among them is the Pitch Lake at Trinidad. This spot has been described as one of the "wonders of the world"; it was visited by Sir Walter Raleigh, who caulked his ships from its strange depths, while it is supposed to realise some features of those infernal regions of which so much has been written in proportion to what is known. It happens, therefore, that any traveller who, having landed at Trinidad, fails to see the Pitch Lake, must be prepared to be for ever assured that he has missed the one thing worth seeing in the New World.

Froude is among the few who have boldly defied the temptation to look upon this spot. He has declared in writing, and with evident pride, that he "resisted all exhortations to visit it."

The lake is situated near La Brea, a poor village on the west coast of Trinidad, some thirty-six miles from Port of Spain. The journey thither is, under ordinary conditions, tedious, being effected partly by train, partly by steamer and partly on foot. My visit to the lake was rendered both agreeable and interesting through the kindness of Mr. Bartlett, the manager of the company which is at present in possession of the wondrous pool.

Starting in a launch from Port of Spain we landed at Brighton, where is a pier from which the asphalt is shipped. The land thereabouts is low and commonplace, the beach a narrow line of sand, the bay alive with pelicans. There are curious things on the shore, in the form of boulders of pitch which have oozed up through the sand from the mysterious abyss, as if they were the "casts" of some awful worm. They have been polished by the

sea into shining globules of jet, some of which are fringed with green weed—the strangest rocks to be seen upon any coast.

One associates asphalt with city streets and tramways, so it is strange to see lumps of it among the common objects of the seashore, and providing a resting-place for pelicans. Everything about this quaint seaport has some community with pitch. The piles of the pier are caked with pitch, the pavements are of pitch, as is the solitary highway, the black child sitting on a pitch boulder is nursing a doll made of pitch.

The lake is about a mile from the shore on slightly raised ground, surrounded by scanty jungle and a number of Moriche palms. The first impression of the visitor when he looks down upon the famous pool must be a little influenced by the accounts he may have read of it. So many authors insist upon comparing the place with the Hades of the ancients. Even Kingsley speaks of it as "an inferno," as a "Stygian pool," as "the fountain of Styx," and "thinks it well for the human mind that the pitch lake was still unknown when Dante wrote his hideous poem." There are writers who tell vaguely of smoke and flames, as well as of sulphurous smells. It is little to be doubted that the name of the place is in some measure answerable for these impressions. It recalls the lake "which burneth with fire and brimstone" on the one hand, while boiling pitch has always held a prominent place in the diabolical menage. If the locality had been called "the asphalt flat" it is probable that none of these fancies would have fluttered into the minds of men. There is nothing Dantesque about asphalt; indeed, the spot, if less unfortunately named, would no more have suggested the inferno than would a lake of Portland cement.

The visitor to La Brea will see neither flames nor smoke, nor anything boiling, nor will he be helped in other ways to realise the awfulness of the stream by Charon's ferry. The place is by no means terrible nor awe-inspiring. It is as bare of the poetic afflatus as is a coal-merchant's yard. The poet of Florence might have gazed upon it unmoved, although Kingsley believes that it would have suggested to him "the torments of lost beings sinking

slowly in the black Bolge beneath the baking rays of the tropic sun."

As a matter of fact, people can only sink in the lake with difficulty and with infinite patience. A man who attempted suicide by this process would die of starvation and boredom before he had sunk much above his knees, and to get even so far he would have to be pertinacious.

When I saw the lake there was but a solitary man upon it, near about its centre. He was a coolie squatting on the pitch on his hams, washing clothes in one of the many little puddles on the lake's surface.

If a Londoner would realise the Pitch Lake, he must imagine the pond in St. James's Park emptied of water, its bottom filled with asphalt, pools left in places, and some tropical vegetation disposed about the margin of the depression. Such a landscape would only inspire in the susceptible conceptions of the scenery of Hell.

The Pitch Lake, when I first caught sight of it, had exactly the appearance of the ultimate creek of an estuary at low tide. I saw a wide flat of a hundred acres, wherein were runnels of water which may have been left by the ebb, large stretches of what appeared to be mud dried by the sun, and a few small islands covered with brush. The mud was pitch, the water was rainwater, the islands were genuine.

When the brink of the lake was reached there was no suggestion of the bank of that river where shuddering souls must wait for a crossing. It looked more like the edge of a pond near a great city which had been frozen over, but the ice of which had been dulled by the dirt from many boots. I stepped from the grass on to this surface with just as much caution as one would employ in placing a foot on suspicious ice. It might have been slippery but it was not. In a few moments, after jumping across some waterways, I was in the middle of the lake walking on the asphalt of commerce valued at so much per ton.

The sensation that walking upon this substance gave was no other than that of treading upon the flank of some immense

beast, some Titanic mammoth lying prostrate in a swamp. The surface was black, it was dry and minutely wrinkled like an elephant's skin, it was blood-warm, it was soft and yielded to the tread precisely as one would suppose that an acre of solid flesh would yield. The general impression was heightened by certain surface creases where the hide seemed to be turned in as it is in the folds behind an elephant's ears. These skin furrows were filled with water as if the collapsed animal were perspiring.

The heat of the air was great, the light was almost blinding, while the shimmer upon the baked surface, added to the swaying of one's feet in soft places, gave rise to the idea that the mighty beast was still breathing, and that its many-acred flank actually moved.

I am told that the full extent of the pitch-bearing area is 110 acres, and that its exact depth is unknown. The asphalt is not bailed out as the readers of some guide-books might suppose, nor is it dug up. It is hooked out in junks with a pick, each piece separating from the mass with a dry bright fracture like that of a blue flint. The lump so delved from the "Stygian pool" is lifted up with the hands and thrown ignominiously into a truck. These trucks run on rails and sleepers across the lake. The rails and sleepers of the "permanent way" sink slowly into the solid pitch, so that once in every three days they have both to be raised up and readjusted on the surface.

On each side of the trackway there will be a trough or trench produced by the labours of the men with the picks. This trough rapidly fills again level and solid, is again dug out only to close in once more. It thus comes about that although the asphalt is being removed at the rate of 100,000 tons a year, the lines of rail need never to be altered in direction.

The lake, like the Burning Bush, is not consumed; the furrow remains ever unfinished; the task is as hopeless as the ploughing of sand, and is one that might well have wearied even Sisyphus, the roller of the ever-slipping stone. Day by day, month by month, year by year, the lake presents the same strange picture of

THE PITCH LAKE, TRINIDAD.

men toiling at a trench which as they pass along only closes up behind them.

As they leave their work at sundown they look back at a gully cut across the black morass, but when they come to the brim of the lake at dawn they find that all is level again, and that the ditch, the labour of a day, has vanished.

It is said that many women, when inquiring as to the origin of a product, will be satisfied with the answer that it is "made by machinery"; so there are many people who are ready to believe that any terrestrial phenomenon is to be explained by "volcanic action." To "volcanic action" the formation of the Pitch Lake has been ascribed, but, unhappily for this conclusion, there is no trace of volcanic energy in the Island of Trinidad.

The origin of the asphalt is identical with that of mineral oil. Indeed, pitch would appear to be no other than oil which, owing to a peculiar geological disposition, has become inspissated in a convenient basin or evaporating dish.

There are subtle movements in this unrippled pool; the islands wander aimlessly from shore to shore like undecided ghosts; the trunk of a tree will rise out of the phlegmatic lake and after pointing for a while skywards, as if it were a warning finger, will withdraw into the black depths again. These movements, and the curiously inturned creases on the lake's surface are explained by convection currents and not by subterranean influences. To the same commonplace cause is ascribed the filling of that heartless trench which no spade can empty.

XVII.

THE BOCAS.

WHO has not heard of the famous Bocas of Trinidad, of those wild sea-passes which lead into the Gulf of Paria? One gateway guards the approach by the north, another that by the south. It was by the southern Boca, the Serpent's Mouth, that Columbus came, but it is not notably picturesque. The northern passage, on the other hand, the Boca del Drago or Dragon's Mouth, is magnificent to behold. At this end of the bay Trinidad comes nearest to the mainland, while the strait is further narrowed by three islands which stretch in a line across the dividing sea. The belt of water is thus broken into four channels; that to the west is the Boca Grande, then come the Boca de Navios (the Way of Ships), the Boca de Huevos or Egg Passage, and finally the Boca de Monos or Monkey's Channel.

Of these the Boca de Monos is the most imposing. It is a narrow, echoing channel, some three cables wide, hemmed in between forbidding precipices, which rise on one side to the height of a thousand feet. Down this ocean defile a great tide rushes, circling in mad eddies. The mighty flood as it lifts itself over a hidden reef shows a huge curved back above the stream as if it were some glistening sea monster. A grey rock with a dead tree on it stands alone in the fairway, where the rollers fall upon it with the force of a battering-ram. The Boca de Monos is best seen from the open sea about the time of sun-down. The cliffs, sheer and ominous, are then in shade. They stand upon either side of the defile, flanking it like pylons at the entrance to a temple avenue. It is a solemn and majestic portal, and the

first trembling ship that was whirled down the pass might well have wondered if beyond was the Sea of Death.

It was through this Boca that Columbus went out when he sailed away from Trinidad. The pass is a place for baffling winds, but his ungainly, unmanageable ships were hurried through, like driftwood, rolling to this side and that, the sails flapping, the yards swinging until the braces snapped, the helmsmen powerless, and each man crossing himself and muttering prayers. Many and many a buccaneer has crept through this sea alley, hoping to find a fat merchantman dozing in the sun in the bay. Many a tempest-chased craft has been swept through this channel as helpless as a child's boat in a mill sluice, to be dashed to pieces on the rocks, or to find peace in the land-locked gulf beyond. Through the southern Boca came Raleigh in the small boats which were to carry him to El Dorado; he in an old galley with benches to row upon, the others in two wherries, a barge and a ship's boat—one hundred men all told.

Of the many remarkable craft that have passed through the Dragon's Mouth the most remarkable appeared off the entrance to the channel on June 7, 1805. It was no small company that hove in sight that day, for it was made up of thirteen battleships—viz. ten sail of the line and three frigates. They approached the Boca with every stitch of sail set. It was evident that they were in hot haste. At every masthead flew the British flag. Most curious, however, was the fact that every ship was cleared for action, every gunner was standing by his piece, the magazines were open and piles of arms for boarding were heaped upon the decks. This was the more strange because the Gulf of Paria, save for a few fishing boats, a trader or two and many pelicans, was empty and the picture of confiding peace.

The first ship to pass the Boca had on her stern the name *Victory* and on her quarter-deck a British admiral, a spare man of middle age who had but one arm and one eye—Horatio Nelson. Never did any adventurer show such an eagerness as he did to get a glimpse of the shipping in the Gulf of Paria; never was a man so disappointed when he found the great haven empty.

The tale of that surprising voyage, told already many times, may be told again, for it is never to be forgotten.

In the spring of 1805 Nelson had been long watching the French fleet around the southern coasts of Europe. On March 31 the entire French squadron under Admiral Villeneuve slipped out of Toulon harbour and vanished. Nelson, although much hampered by bad weather, searched every bay on the French and Spanish seaboard, and scoured the Mediterranean from one end to the other.

Early in May the conviction seized him that the French had gone to the West Indies. On May 11 he set off on the chase. Villeneuve had forty days' start of him. He reached Madeira in four bustling days—no news. With every sail drawing he pressed on to Barbados, made Carlisle Bay on June 4, only to hear that the French were at Trinidad.

Away he flew to the south. The scent was hot. He would catch them in the Gulf of Paria. No better place could be wished for : the battle that was ever in his mind would be the battle of Port of Spain. It was in this spirit that, three days later, he came foaming through the Bocas, cleared for action. He found the anchorage deserted. A despatch boat sent into the harbour of the town came back with the news that the fleet was at Grenada.

Round swung the English ships in a twinkling and before the town folk had ceased to marvel they were through the Bocas again, heading north and leaving the quiet gulf once more to the fishermen and the pelicans. Grenada was sighted on the 9th and every eye was strained to catch a glimpse of the crowd of masts. The roads were empty, but the news bellowed from the quay was good —the French were off to Antigua.

A fierce English cheer rang through the little harbour and Nelson, like a hound who had met a check, was away again and heading for Antigua ; for Antigua was near to Nevis where he first met his wife and where, indeed, he was married. Breathless and savage the ships luffed up off the island on June 12, but Villeneuve was not there. He had gone to Europe, so the people at the port told the pursuers.

Never for a moment had the chase flagged, yet never so far had the sea-dogs a sight of their quarry. Hot-foot they had come from Europe to the West Indies; now they were on their way back to Europe again; eight thousand good sea miles, out and home, and a heavy pressure of canvas all the way.

Nelson left Antigua on June 13. On June 21 he writes in his diary: "Saw three planks which, I think, came from the French fleet." On July 19 the *Victory* and her companions dropped anchor in the harbour of Gibraltar. On July 20 there is this entry in the admiral's book: "I went on shore for the first time since June 16, 1803, and from having my foot out of the *Victory* two years wanting two days."

The chase that commenced on May 11 ended on October 21 off Cape Trafalgar, where the great battle, that had been for half a year in Nelson's thoughts, was won. So the chase ended well. The honour of England was upheld and the weary sea-rover was at last "home from the sea."

The *Victory* is still afloat in Portsmouth Harbour, the very same *Victory* that came roaring through the Boca on that day in June. There in the simple cabin are the windows from which Nelson took his last look of England, lying dim in the wake of his ship. There is the deck he paced for so many harassing days. Over these very bulwarks he leaned, looking out for the hunted fleet. There, last of all, is the dingy corner in the cockpit where, propped up against the good old vessel's beams, the most gallant of British admirals drifted out into the Unruffled Haven.

XVIII.

THE FIVE ISLANDS.

ONE of the most pleasant ways of seeing the northern Bocas is by means of the steamer which plies between Port of Spain and Chacachacare, the outermost of the three islands which form the channels.

On the passage the vessel calls at the Five Islands. These dots of land form one of the most picturesque groups to be met with in this world of islands. They are all very small, all very green, all have grey, tide-worn cliffs, while on each is a fascinating villa with a red, or striped, roof and white walls. One little isle is so minute that it is entirely taken up by the house that crowns it—a Venice within the circuit of a child's garden.

The settlement is given up wholly to enjoyment. It is a sea sanctuary for the hot days of summer. It is the idler's archipelago. The islands are those of the nursery tale, and of the Willow Pattern Plate. Send a boy there with a boat, a fishing-rod and a bathing-dress, and he would believe that he had found the Hesperides of his classical studies. He will find tiny coves and dark caves where he can "go a-pyrating," miniature beaches, six paces wide, to land his treasure, a jungle the size of his school-room, and a cape that he can sit astride of. His sister will be enamoured of the arbour by the sea, of the stone stairs leading up from the landing-place, of the doll's-house terrace, and of the blue pool so close below her window that she can almost touch the water.

Beyond the Five Islands and near to the Boca de Monos is the island of Gaspar Grande. On the point of it are the remains of the Spanish fort which the British had set their hearts upon

taking when Harvey and Abercromby anchored off the island on February 16, 1797 (see page 65). The fort is at the opening into Chaguaramas Bay, a bay of entrancing loveliness. Here, on the day named, four Spanish line-of-battle ships were lying, together with a gun brig.

The English were busy all night making preparations for the taking of the fort and the capture of the ships. At two in the morning the tree-covered cliffs around the bay were illuminated by a wild column of flames. The Spaniards had set fire to their vessels, and in the glare the water was seen to be dotted with boats all rowing for the shore. Out of the five men-of-war the English saved but one, the *San Damasco.* The rest were burned to the water's edge. When the daylight came the fort on Gaspar Grande was found to be deserted.

To any who may be interested in pelicans the Five Islands and the bay that saw the burning of the ships may be commended. These pelicans are curiously ungainly birds who, although puffed up with self-satisfied wisdom, have an aspect of extreme and shabby old age. Apparently overlooked in the progress of evolution they have become so obsolete as to be ridiculous, for they ought long ago to have retired into the fossil state. To be consistent with their environment they should be hovering over a lagoon full of saurians or should be watching from a swamp the dull movements of palæolithic man.

They fish and with surprising success, but in the most uncouth and primitive manner. They flap to and fro over the sea with an assumption of boredom, then suddenly drop into the water and come up with a struggling fish. There is no suggestion of diving, no pretence to the graceful art of the gannet. They simply tumble into the sea, with their wings open, like an untidy parcel. That they reach the water head first seems to be purely an accident.

The well-known legend of the pelican and her indiscreet method of feeding her young in times of stress was in ancient days often employed to point a moral lesson to the young. The modern schoolboy or girl remains unmoved by the recital of the pelican's

virtues. John Sparke, in his account of Hawkins' second voyage, thus describes the devotion of the bird and adds some criticism upon the appearance of the misguided fowl which is in accord with the average mariner's estimate of female qualities. "I noted," he says, "the pelican, which is feigned to be the lovingest bird that is, which, rather than that her young should want, will spare her heart's blood out of her belly; but for all this lovingness she is very deformed to behold."

XIX.

A GLANCE AT THE MAP.

FROM Trinidad, twice in the year, a special steamer starts for a cruise among the West Indian islands. Before embarking upon such a voyage it is well to take a glance at the map, in order to appreciate the remarkable disposition of land and sea in this part of the globe.

A crowd of islands, arranged in the form of a sickle, extends from the point of Florida to the north-east of Venezuela. They are of every size, ranging from an island larger than Ireland to a mere rock an acre in extent. They form a series of stepping-stones between North and South America, the summits of a submarine causeway joining the two continents, and the foundations of a breakwater which, if complete, would make an inland sea of the American Mediterranean.

This immense stretch of water, formed by the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, is, even now, nearly land-locked. To cross it at its greatest length would compel a journey further than that from Liverpool to New York, while the voyager who followed its sea borders would skirt the coasts of Florida, Texas and Mexico, the length of Central America, the northern shores of the southern continent and the whole sweep of islands from Trinidad to the Bahamas. At his journey's end he would have travelled 12,000 miles.

On the west this Mediterranean ocean is closed by solid land —closed until the Panama Canal is completed—but on the east there are many gaps in the sea wall, as well as four wide ways that lead out into the open Atlantic—viz. by the Anegada channel, by the Mona and Windward Passages, and by the Straits of

Yucatan. Through these waterways, through every chink in the colossal masonry, through every runnel between the Titanic stones pours the Gulf Stream on its way to the north. Between Jupiter Inlet on the coast of Florida and Memory Rock in the Bahamas the stream is at its narrowest, but even here "it represents a moving mass equal to about three hundred thousand Mississippi rivers." [1]

Those who are learned in the tale of the days when the earth was young, say that a tract of mountainous land did once stretch all the way from Florida to Venezuela, and that the islands became islands partly by a sinking of the land and partly through the upheaving of volcanoes. They say also that there was a time when a man could walk from Jamaica to the mainland and find himself at Cape Gracias a Dios, for even now there are shoals along that way, such as "Pedro Bank," "Seranilla Bank" and "Thunder Knoll," as well as rocks and cays upon which the sea breaks in heavy weather. These rocks which mount out of the sea, as they once lifted themselves up into the clouds, are the needle points of everlasting hills, so that a little cay with only a poor tuft of samphire on it might be the pinnacle of a submerged Matterhorn.

Many of these shallows, by the way, have names that provoke great curiosity. Who, for instance, was the lady made immortal by the "Rosalind Bank"? Was she a sea-rover's wife who, although she may lie in a forgotten churchyard by the English Channel, will yet live so long as there is a chart of the Caribbean Sea? Who, too, was "Old Isaacs" after whom an unpleasant shoal near the Grand Cayman was named? Was he the shuffling old man who waited on the captain and who was the butt of the ship, or was he a troublesome money-lender at some such easy-going spot as Port Royal?

The Grand Cayman, it may here be said, is a small, low-lying, tree-covered island belonging to Great Britain. It does a trade in turtles and cocoanuts, rears cattle, and boasts of a prison and other evidences of civilisation. It is a colony perched on the

[1] *Cuba and Porto Rico*, by Robert T. Hill, page 10: New York, 1903.

pinnacle of an isolated submarine mountain whose northern slope is 10,662 feet high, while on the south the depth from the streets of its little town to the solid earth is 20,568 feet, or nearly four miles. If the sea were to drain away, as did the snow from around Baron Munchausen's church steeple, then would George Town, the capital of the Grand Cayman, appear on the very apex of a mountain which (viewed from its southern valley) would be nearly a mile higher than Mont Blanc.

There are deep seas in this part of the world. In crossing a pool to the north of Puerto Rico, for instance, a ship would have 27,366 feet of water beneath her, so that if a coin were dropped overboard it would have to travel more than five miles before it reached the bottom.[1]

Of the individual islands it is only necessary to say that the Greater Antilles (Cuba, Jamaica, San Domingo, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Archipelago) rest on a common submarine bed and are fragments of a continent through which runs, from west to east, a mountain chain.

These are the Leeward Islands properly so called, the "Islas soto viento" of the Spanish because the north-east trade wind blows so constantly from the eastward throughout the year and because they lie, in relation to the other groups, to the west.

The Windward Islands stand away towards the rising sun and are known most usually as the Lesser Antilles or Caribbee Islands.[2] Finally there is a group of islands called the Coast Islands. They were included by the Spanish in the "Islas soto viento," and are to be regarded merely as detached portions of the coast of South America. They extend from Tobago to Oruba.[3]

The islands which are most closely concerned with the present

[1] The height of Mt. Everest is, for comparison, 29,002 feet.

[2] Unfortunately the Caribbee Islands are divided, for purely administrative purposes, into two groups, Windward and Leeward, which terms have no reference to the direction of the prevailing wind.

[3] The chief of the Coast Islands are Tobago, Trinidad, Margarita, Tortuga, and Curaçoa. Among them, too, is

"the pleasant Isle of Aves beside the Spanish Main,"

sung of by Kingsley in his *Lay of the Last Buccaneer.*

voyage are the Caribbee Islands. They form a regular crescent from Sombrero, or the Spanish Hat, in the north, to Grenada in the south. Along a part of the crescent they range themselves into two lines—an outer and an inner chain—one facing the Atlantic, the other the Caribbean Sea. The outer row of islands [1] are built up of white limestone or coral rock and are all comparatively low-lying, no point that they can boast of reaching 1400 feet. With the exception of Antigua none of these islands show evidence of volcanic action.

The inner or main line of islands [2] are the most interesting and picturesque in the archipelago. They are all of volcanic origin, are all crater heaps. Even the little Grenadines represent "the scattered fragments of a great volcano disrupted during some tremendous outburst in late Tertiary times." [3] They are precipitous, rising almost vertically out of the sea, and mount to great heights. The highest point, that of some 5000 feet, is attained by Morne Diablotin in Dominica. Some are mere crater cones, as are the islands of Saba, St. Eustatius and Nevis. Others present stately peaks and dim ravines, towering mornes and winding valleys.

In these islands, so weird and so fantastic, the land has been rent and torn by awful forces, has been shaken by convulsions which must have sent a shudder through the great world, has been kneaded and moulded by terrific hands. The soil is dark for it is made up of ashes, of poured out lava, of piled up cinders and rocks. The rains of the tropics have gouged out river beds and gullies, have made in one place a rich plain and in another a stagnant swamp. There are here no smooth, whale-back downs covered with gorse, no be-flowered water meadows, no white cliffs. In their place are mountain peaks hammered out upon the world's anvil into the form of prongs and pikes, together with ragged chines where the cup of the crater would seem to have cracked with fervent heat.

[1] These are Sombrero, Anguilla, St. Martin, St. Bartholomew, Barbuda, Antigua, Desirade and Marie Galante.

[2] These are Saba, St. Eustatius, St. Kitts, Nevis, Montserrat, Guadaloupe, Dominica, Martinique, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, the Grenadines and Grenada.

[3] Keane, *Central and South America*, vol. ii. page 279: London, 1901.

The very soil which is so fertile has been hurled up from the great furnace in the vaults of the globe.

All these islands are covered with luxuriant vegetation from the wall of green at the water's edge to their mist-enticing summits. Their "woods are perpetually green as the plumage of a green parrot."[1] Their seas are ever a pansy-blue. "Their days have such an azure expansion, so enormous a luminosity that it does not seem to be *our* sky above, but the heaven of some larger world . . . lit by the light of a white sun."[2]

In the days when the islands were fashioned this corner of the world must have been the scene of an appalling spectacle. A curved line of volcanoes rising out of the sea, belching fire and smoke and cascades of ashes into the lowering skies. Each island a mouth coming up to breathe from the inner fire, a vent of the vast furnace thrust up through the deep.

For long after the blaze had died away each round of land would be a mere black cinder cone. Then would come, borne by the birds and the winds, the germs of vegetation and the blush of green. Ferns and bushes would cover the harsh scars. Woods would climb to the very edge of the smoking crater. Fluttering wings would fill the solitudes with life.

One night, among the trees around some quiet beach, a light would be seen and the red reflection of it would fall upon the water in the lonely bay. Then it would be known that man had come.

[1] Lafcadio Hearn, *Life and Letters*, page 424.
[2] *Ibid.* pages 412 and 416.

XX.

GRENADA.

GRENADA is the first island reached from Trinidad. The steamer finds its way into a small almost land-locked harbour which is one of the most beautiful in the West Indies. It is said to be the crater of an ancient volcano the seaward wall of which has been blown away, so that the water has poured in and filled the basin. It is through the breach that the ship steams to her moorings. Anyhow it is a homely haven, cosy and well sheltered from the sea. A curving bank of green hills covered with trees and gardens makes an amphitheatre, the arena of which is such a pool of blue water as can only be seen in these latitudes.

On one side of the pool is the town of St. George's. The houses which compose it have white or grey walls and rust-red roofs. They clamber up the slope among the palms and balance themselves on the summit of the ridge, where, too, is a church with a square tower standing up against the sky. Beyond the town, on a spit of high land making for the sea is an old stolid grey fort. It was built by the French just two hundred years ago. Although long deserted it has still an aspect of great solemnity and importance, still the look of the grim watch-dog. There are now paths around its ponderous walls, and it is evident that children come here to play. They even put stones into the cannons' mouths as if they were teasing a giant of the soundness of whose sleep they were well assured.

The town creeps down to the water's edge, to a foreign-looking quay with such warehouses and buildings on it as are seen along the wharf side of a French seaport. This is no matter for wonder since the place has been French for the greater part of its life.

STREET IN GRENADA.

MARKET SQUARE, GRENADA.

With the waterside houses are mixed up, in some strange way, the masts and rigging of white-hulled schooners and of trading sloops. From a further acquaintance with St. George's it appears that the town sits astride of the ridge as a rider sits on a saddle, and that the real capital is on that side of the slope which is away from the harbour. The road from the quay to the market-place is therefore over a bank so steep that some years ago the governor of the time drove a tunnel through the base of the ridge to the great comfort of the inhabitants and of their horses and mules.

The town is picturesque and French. It possesses many old and dignified houses with ample roofs, great dormer windows and liberal sun-shutters. The central square, or market-place, might belong to any modest French town were it not for the black folk, the blaze of colour and light, the strange trees and the still stranger wares exposed for sale.

The country inland is singularly fascinating. Its surface is that of the crumpled handkerchief of which Columbus spoke to his Queen, an extravagant jumble of verdant hills and valleys. It is wilder than Trinidad if, possibly, less luxuriant. Some call Grenada the Spice Island because of its nutmegs and other spices. It may as well be named the Island of Ferns by reason of the damp banks of moss and fern which line its tortuous roads.

A good idea of the island, of its peaks and glens, and of some fragment of its coast line, can be gained by a journey to the Grand Etang, a large pool on the summit of a hill some 1740 feet above the sea level. The lake is distant from St. George's seven miles, and out of these steamy miles are six which are persistently uphill and as tedious as a road in Purgatory. The lake lies sunken in a deep hollow among the woods, which hollow is no other than the basin of an ancient crater. It may be Sleepy Hollow from its quietness. The crater is now a crater of leaves, for its steep sides, which were once a slope of cinders, are lined by rushes and palms and a closely standing company of sedate trees. The water is two and a half miles round and is impressive mainly by reason of the great tankard it fills and of the utter solitude in which it sleeps. The negro, with an exercise of imagination

which he rarely displays, calls the pool "The Home of the Mother of the Rains."

There is on the northern coast a height named Le Morne des Sauteurs. It is said that the French, when they came to Grenada, ill-used and robbed the Caribs whom they found on this island of spices. Through many a sordid year they hunted them down until, in the end, the few who remained were hounded to the top of this hill. There the harried, starving band of islanders made a stand. The French closed in upon them. The cruel circle narrowed until the way back even to the burnt cabins was cut off. Nearer and nearer the bushes rustled as they were bent aside by the shoulders of advancing men. Here was a hand pushing a branch out of the way; here the gleam of a cutlass. Murder was creeping upon them like a creeping fire. Before them was the kindly sea, blue, tranquil and limitless. The time of farewell had come, so from the top of the precipice—as from the jutting brink of the world—they leapt into the air and in such wise the last of the race found peace.

XXI.

THE FAIR HELEN OF THE WEST INDIES.

No island in these waters will be approached with greater interest and expectancy than the island of St. Lucia. This is not on account of its winsome beauty, although there are many who hold it to be the loveliest spot in this gorgeous crescent. It is not by reason of its size, for it covers an area less than that of the county of Middlesex. It has no natural features to make it remarkable, unless they be certain sulphur springs and the towering rocks known as the Pitons. Yet for centuries little St. Lucia was the most important island in the West Indies. As such it looms majestically in the history of these troubled seas. To the many who strove to find a footing in the archipelago, St. Lucia was ever the key to the attainment. In every fresh scheme of conquest the little island was the goal to be reached, the guerdon of the conqueror. Hold St. Lucia, and the rest may perish!

There can hardly be a spot that, for its size, has played a more stirring part in the history of arms or in the chronicles of the British navy and army. There is no dot of land that has been so desperately fought over, so savagely wrangled for, as this too fair island. St. Lucia is the Helen of the West Indies, and has been the cause of more blood-shedding than was ever provoked by Helen of Troy. Seven times was it held by the English, and seven times by the French. For no less than one hundred and fifty years it was the arena of the most bitter and deadly strife. Whenever war broke out between England and France, the call that at once rang out in the west was ever the same: "To St. Lucia! To St. Lucia!"

The panic-ridden town of Castries has seen more of the storming of heights, of the rushing of trenches and of the battering of forts, than any town across the seas. It has witnessed gladiatorial combats that would have thrilled the Colosseum at Rome. Here at St. Lucia is that spit of land, La Vigie, the look-out, where the watchman, whether French or English, never slumbered nor slept. Here are Gros Islet and Pigeon Island, made memorable by Rodney as the scenes of his dashing sea-story.

Here, too, is that ever famous hill, the Morne Fortuné, which for a century or more was the height around which every battle raged. Whoever held the Morne Fortuné, the Lucky Hill, held the island. It would be hard to tell how many times it was stormed, how often the English took it, and how often the French. Assuredly can it be said that within no like ring of ground do the grass and the brambles cover a greater company of British dead. It hides the French dead also. Every patriotic Frenchman is proud of the Morne, for the soldiers of that gallant country made the hill as renowned for deeds of valour as did the men they fought with. How many memories, cherished in the hearts of mothers, wives and sweethearts, must have clung about this "green hill far away"! Even yet there must be, hidden away in old bureaus, letters with the faded heading, "Morne Fortuné." Some of these would narrate, with all the glee of a lad, how the boats landed, how the slopes were rushed, and how, to the cheering of his company, the famous Morne was taken. Lucky Hill! Other papers in more formal writing would tell how the lad had sickened and grown silent, how he had longed for little more than news from home and an end to his miseries, and how, at last, his company had carried him away and buried him on the side of the Lucky Hill.

As the steamer is nearing the harbour it may be well to scan, in the briefest summary, the remarkable chronicles of this island.

In 1605 some English colonists landed out of the *Olive Blossome*, which had recently been advancing the empire in simple fashion at Barbados (page 7). In less than two months these enterprising folk were massacred by the Caribs.

In 1635 the king of France generously granted to Messieurs Latine and Du Plessis "*all* the unoccupied lands in America." They modestly selected Martinique, leaving St. Lucia for the time to the unappeasable natives.

In 1639 the English again attempted to establish a colony on the comely island, but the adventurers were promptly massacred or scattered by the Caribs.

In 1642 the king of France ceded St. Lucia and other islands to the French West Indian Company. The company being composed of needy speculators effected little ; although in 1650 they succeeded in selling St. Lucia and Grenada to Messieurs Houel and Du Parquet for 1660*l.*, obtaining in this way some desirable ready money. Du Parquet in the following year erected a fort and in spite of angry opposition from the natives founded an uneasy settlement of forty colonists.

In 1660 the French and English conspired together to wheedle the island from the now confiding Caribs. This noble work accomplished, they fell out between themselves and began that struggle for the possession of the island which lasted for one hundred and fifty years.

In 1664 a party of English from Barbados landed at Anse du Choc and wrested the island from the French. In 1667 by the treaty of Breda it was restored to France again.

In 1722 George I., apparently out of bravado, granted St. Lucia to John, Duke of Montagu. It was an unkind gift. That nobleman tried to possess himself of his property but failed very lamentably.

In 1728 both the British and the French held such strong positions on the place that, in order to save further bloodshed, they agreed to regard St. Lucia as neutral. By the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle it was formally made neutral, but in spite of agreements and treaties the fighting never ceased.

In 1756, on an outbreak of war with France, St. Lucia was captured by the English. In 1763, by the treaty of Paris, it was restored to France. The French now put the island in order and moved the chief fort from La Vigie to the hill which was destined to become so famous as the Morne Fortuné.

In 1778, England being again at war with France, the two fleets made for St. Lucia with all press of sail. The British arrived first. The Morne Fortuné was stormed and St. Lucia was once more in the hands of the English.

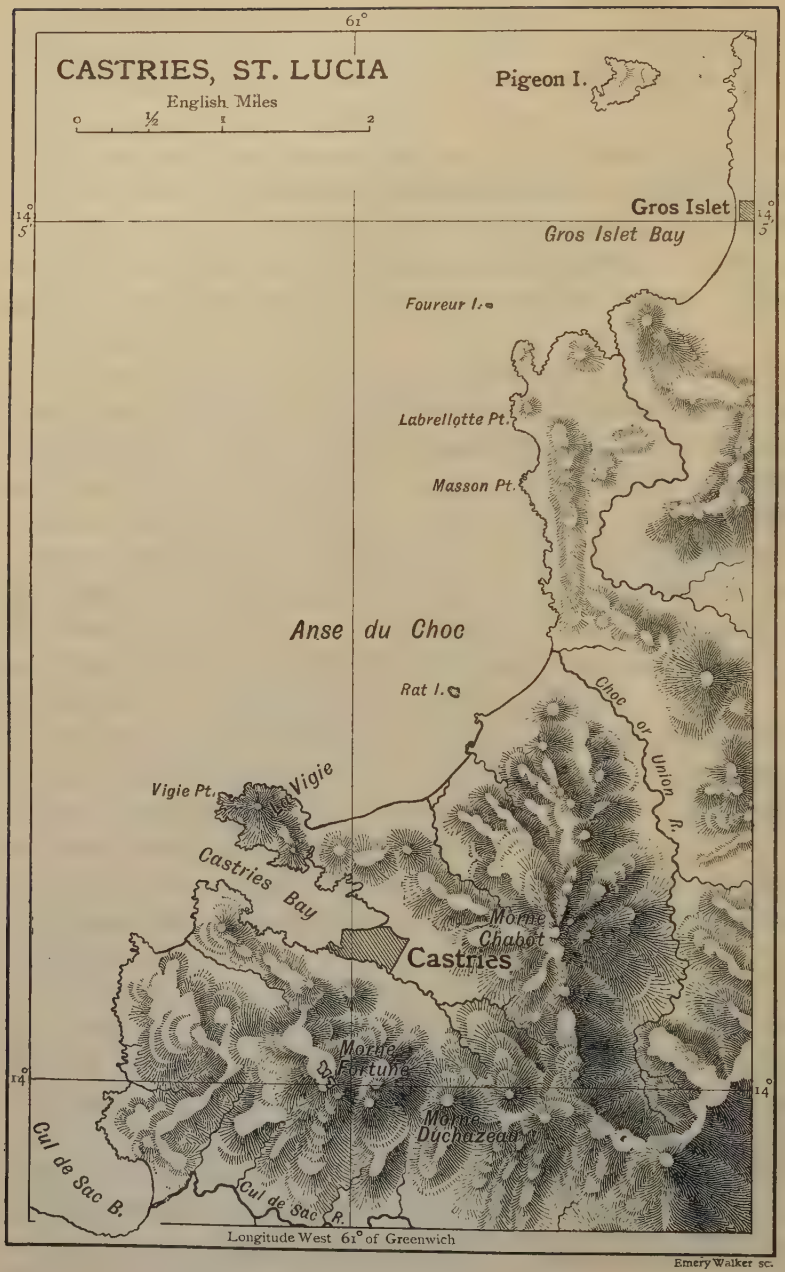
In 1781 the great French fleet under De Grasse bore down upon this unhappy settlement with no less than "twenty-five sail of the line." They landed at Gros Islet and made a desperate attempt to seize the island, but the enterprise failed. In 1783, by the treaty of Versailles, St. Lucia was handed back once more to the French.

In 1794 the English, under General Grey, landing at various spots, took the Morne Fortuné at the point of the bayonet. The British flag was planted on the summit by the Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria. Late in the same year Goyrand made a sudden onslaught and seized St. Lucia for the French, gaining all but two forts. In the following year the English were ignominiously driven out of the island by Victor Hugues, the friend of Robespierre. In their flight they left their women and children behind. These unhappy people were, however, sent to Martinique by the French under a flag of truce.

In 1796 a large British force under Sir Ralph Abercromby and Sir John Moore stormed the Morne Fortuné and, after much desperate fighting, captured it. In 1802, by the treaty of Amiens, St. Lucia was again given back to France.

It will be noticed that, throughout these many changes, the English had the better of the fighting and the French of the diplomacy.

Finally in 1803 Commodore Hood came in hot haste to St. Lucia and anchored in Anse du Choc Bay. The island was held at the time by General Noguès. La Vigie and Castries were easily taken by the British, whereupon the French general retired to the Morne Fortuné and refused to surrender. The Morne was stormed at 4 A.M. on June 22 and in less than an hour the works were carried at the point of the bayonet with small loss to the attacking force. With the storming-party was the gallant Sir Thomas Picton, the hero of Badajoz.


61°
CASTRIES, ST. LUCIA
English Miles
0 ½ 1 2
Pigeon I.
Gros Islet
Gros Islet Bay
14° 5'
Foureur I.
Labrellotte Pt.
Masson Pt.
Anse du Choc
Rat I.
Choc or Union R.
Vigie Pt.
La Vigie
Castries Bay
Morne Chabot
Castries
Morne Fortune
Morne Duchazeau
Cul de Sac B.
Cul de Sac R.
14°
Longitude West 61° of Greenwich
Emery Walker sc.

In 1814 the fair and fickle St. Lucia was finally ceded to Great Britain.

St. Lucia as approached from the sea is as dainty and beautiful an island as the heart could wish. Softly wooded to its highest peaks, there is nothing to suggest that it has been the firebrand of the West Indies, the island of strife, whose glades have been reddened with blood and whose slopes are riddled with the graves of valiant men. At the end of a verdant fiord, which would tempt any lazy holiday-maker, is Castries. This town receives its name from Marshal de Castries, who in 1785 was the French Minister of the Colonies. To the right of the entrance into the harbour of Castries is Cul de Sac Bay where the British fleet hid, in the famous attack of 1778, to the undoing of the French (page 115).

Castries itself is quite at the water's edge, a squat, shy place, crouching at the feet of the circle of great hills which shuts in the far end of the inlet. The hill ahead is the Morne Duchazeau. It has a saddle-shaped summit with two faint peaks, one representing the pommel and the other the cantle of a rough-rider's saddle. It was to the top of this height that Abercromby dragged his guns—with what labour heaven knows—when he made his attempt on the Morne Fortuné in 1796. The peak to the left is Morne Chabot, taken by Moore at the time of the same desperate assault. The hill to the right is the most beautiful of the three, as well as the nearest to the town. It is very green, for it is covered with trees to the sky line, with plantain and cocoanut, with mango and bread-fruit.

This is the never-to-be-forgotten Morne Fortuné.

XXII.

CUL DE SAC BAY.

CASTRIES harbour with its many capes and bays is protected on the north side by a spit of bare land which ends seawards in a hillock, shaped like the bowl of an inverted spoon. This is La Vigie, the look-out. Across this promontory is the bay called Anse du Choc, where eager armed men in crowding boats made so often a landing. Cul de Sac Bay, to the south, is a sheltered and pleasant inlet at the foot of the southern slopes of the Morne Fortuné. It is a deep-water bay where the lead-line sinks to from ten to twenty fathoms.

The haven was made memorable during the attack on the island in 1778. War had broken out between England and France, and with one accord the French and British fleets made all haste for St. Lucia.

The English under General Grant had the good fortune to reach the island first, as has been already stated. Grant landed his men, to the number of 5000, in Cul de Sac Bay, and there he anchored his ships. As the French garrison was very small, the Morne Fortuné and other forts were taken next day with practically no resistance.

The French fleet carrying 9000 men, under Count D'Estaing, hove in sight a few days later, bearing for Castries under a cloud of canvas. D'Estaing was very happy. The island was so still, so peaceful, so unconscious that the signs of war were already in the skies. He would himself bring the news and with it good cheer to his long-banished comrades. He and his 9000 men would make the good old Morne impregnable, so that when the English came they would have a reception not easy to be

forgotten, for he would cover the slopes of the hill with British red-coats. He could see that there were no ships in Castries harbour; the well-beloved flag of France was flying at the point as well as on the mount. Unhappily he could not see into Cul de Sac Bay.

One may be sure that the Frenchmen cheered as they came sailing into the harbour mouth. No sooner, however, were they within the shelter of the island than—with a puff of smoke and a thrust of flame—a clap of thunder broke out from La Vigie. It was a cannon shot. In a moment every gun in the fort was ablaze. It was no *feu de joie*, for deck houses were being shattered and bulwarks cut to splinters, while men, with a cheer for the French flag on their lips, were falling dead. D'Estaing found that he was in a trap. How had these accursed English got here? With much confusion, jostling, and yelling, the ships were put about, and escaped from the net of the fowler to the open sea.

As D'Estaing moved southwards he took a look into Cul de Sac Bay. There they were, snug enough, curse them! Those were their hateful shouts that echoed back mockingly from the cliffs of the haven. D'Estaing vowed he would sink them at their anchors, for in this land-locked cove they lay at his mercy—or at least so he thought. He made a desperate attack upon the jeering ships from the sea, but they showed no disposition to sink at their anchors. More than that, these men who cheered so heartily actually drove him off. He tried again to crush them, but in the second venture he fared even worse. He determined then to land and to drive these obstinate trespassers from the island. With this intent he sailed north to Gros Islet Bay where he anchored and landed his troops on the ample beach. He marched his men towards Castries, resolving to take La Vigie and to bayonet the wretches who had manned those infernal guns.

La Vigie was held by General Meadows with only 1300 men. Across the neck of land which joins the promontory with the mainland was a line of substantial entrenchments. The French advanced upon the trenches in three columns, a formidable body

of men. They came within musket range of the earthworks, but not a shot was fired by the English. In a silence which would have daunted the bravest they neared the still barricade. The defenders made no sign. It was not until the French were actually in the very ditch that the British responded. They made answer with a heavy fire which poured down like a sudden hail upon the crowd of men in the fosse. The results were disastrous.

The French, however, were not to be denied. As soon as they had reformed they charged the bank with fixed bayonets, but the British fire drove them back. They hurled themselves once more against the wall of gabions and piled-up earth. Once more they were beaten off. A third time, with angry shouts, they rushed upon the earthworks, helmetless, maddened, stung with wounds, every bayonet gripped with desperation. A third time they fell away under the murderous fire of the British. They retired out of musket range, halted, hesitated, and then, while bleeding men were crawling back out of the ditch, the bugle sounded the retreat. This gallant attempt upon La Vigie cost the French no less than 400 killed and 1100 wounded.

D'Estaing had had enough. In ten days' time he had buried his dead, had got his wounded on board, and had sailed away out of sight.

CASTRIES, ST. LUCIA.

The hill to the right is the Morne Fortuné; the saddle-topped hill on its left is the Morne Duchazeau.

GRAVEYARD ON MORNE FORTUNÉ, ST. LUCIA.

XXIII.

THE MORNE FORTUNÉ.

A WINDING road ascends from Castries to the summit of the Morne Fortuné. It is a road made gracious by many trees, by cocoanut palms, by a dell or a thicket here and there, and by glimpses of the sea. All who mount this steep way will find that, step by step, they are carried back into the past. It is a Via Dolorosa, a road of ghosts, a place more full of memories of a kind than are the heights by the Alma or the Ridge at Delhi.

How many hundreds of men, French and English, have climbed this hillside with such ardour and breathless determination and with such fervent light in their eyes that one would suppose they thought to find at the top some beatific vision! If the wealth of the world had been there they could not have stormed the slope with more passionate eagerness. Yet there was nothing on the height but a mast from which hung a faded flag.

The summit of the Morne is flat and of wide extent. There are still many old trees standing against whose trunks soldiers, French and British, must have leaned while they smoked rare pipes and talked of the time when they would be home again, and of "cakes and ale." No traces are now left of the English cottages, of the green clipped hedges and smooth grass plats, about which Breen wrote some sixty years ago.[1] So far as I am aware the famous "iron barracks" are now no more. These buildings were fearfully and wonderfully made in the year 1827,

[1] *St. Lucia*, by H. H. Breen: London, 1844.

and were designed to resist hurricanes. To what extent they succeeded in defying the elements the records are silent. I can only find an account of extensive damage done to them by the earthquake of 1839.

The Morne is now very largely occupied by immense barracks and storehouses of quite recent construction. They belong to that class of "Government building" in which the struggle to attain to primeval plainness and a surpassing monotony has been crowned with success. Defiant in their unblushing ugliness they remain as a monument of the time when the British Government determined to establish a naval and military station at St. Lucia. The huge brick structures which crowd both the Morne and La Vigie were promptly put in hand and were erected at a cost stated to be not less than two million pounds sterling. The precious buildings have never been occupied, nor indeed were they ever quite completed, for the Government, having expended the sum above named, changed its mind and decided, in its wisdom, that St. Lucia was not to be a military station at all. So the mighty pieces of ordnance sent out to further adorn the hill were at infinite cost and labour carried back again. The proceeding seems to have been inspired by an attempt to imitate that Duke of York who is credited in song with having marched a body of men to the top of a hill for the simple pleasure of seeing them march down again.

Still, however, on the Morne are a few venerable buildings which belong to the old fighting days. Here, for example, is an ancient magazine constructed stoutly of stone, once white it may be, but now black with age. Its roof is covered with weeds, its walls and its ponderous buttresses with moss and ferns. It squats there like an old veteran of many wars, wrinkled, scarred and shaky with the weight of years. If its stones could speak they would be very garrulous no doubt, as is the habit of the senile, and would mutter of bygone days as well in French as in English. Probably the British were the first to use the magazine, yet it must have been a French soldier who rushed through the door for a last armful of ammunition. Here, too, is the old well with its

memories of blazing heat and thirsty men. There is a cannon with the date 1818, but it would have arrived long after all the fighting was over.

By far the most interesting object on the summit of the Morne Fortuné is the ancient fort which commands its south-eastern face. This is the side immediately opposite to Morne Duchazeau. There can be little doubt but that it is the identical "flèche" which played so conspicuous a part in Abercromby's attack upon the hill. The details of the venture are as follows: Sir Ralph Abercromby landed in Anse du Choc with 12,000 men on April 26, 1796. With him was that Sir John Moore who thirteen years after was shot dead at Corunna at the moment of victory. At Corunna he was buried amidst surroundings which are made familiar by Wolfe's famous poem "The Burial of Sir John Moore." His portrait in the National Portrait Gallery shows a clean-shaven man with a face so good-humoured and hearty that he seems as if he must break into laughter. Moore first of all took Morne Chabot and then Morne Duchazeau—two out of the three hills which surround Castries. This he effected with the loss of only seventy men. Morne Duchazeau is the saddle-topped hill already described (page 113). It is 890 feet high, is steep and well-covered with trees and bushes. It commands the Morne Fortuné which has an altitude of only 845 feet.

Batteries were constructed on the summit of Duchazeau and then with fearful toil guns were dragged up the mountain side to the emplacements. It must have been a labour of Hercules. Imagine the hauling, pulling and pushing, the skyward-pointing guns, the creaking ropes that swung them from bending tree trunks, the shower of stones when the carriage skidded, the red-faced perspiring men in clammy shirts, the shouts and the oaths, and around all the atmosphere of steam and flies! It was a slow business as well as a hot one, but at daybreak on May 24 Duchazeau opened fire on the Morne Fortuné. The guns did well. In due course Moore at the head of the 27th Regiment "stormed a flèche[1] which formed the principal outwork of the Morne

[1] A flèche is defined as "the simplest form of field fortification."

Fortuné towards the East."[1] He captured it and held it against two desperate attempts of the enemy to retake the position. By sundown the hill was practically in the hands of the English, and on the following morning the garrison of 2000 men laid down their arms. The 27th lost in this strenuous attack eight officers and eighty men.

The old fort or flèche stands alone at the very edge of the hill, immediately facing Morne Duchazeau. In the col between the two heights is a connecting ridge along which Moore came at the head of the 27th Regiment. The fort is well built of stone, but is now so overgrown with grass and bushes that only in a few places can the masonry be seen. The works are in two tiers with a ravelin on one side. It must have been a desperate place to have reached, as any may judge who will descend to the foot of the slope and then climb up to the flèche again.

This quiet, gentle, green mound and ditch are grandly placed, and even now it needs no imagination to tell that he who led the assault upon such an eagle's aerie must have had a stout heart. It is, to-day, an utter solitude, hushed in eternal silence. Probably the last stirring sound that echoed round its walls was on that very day in May when, at sundown, the dirt-stained bugler of the 27th Regiment blew the call "Cease firing."

The view from the summit of the Morne Fortuné is a delight to the eye. Inland is a superb country of steep, soft hills, of black ravines and of valleys that lead far away into bays of purple mist. Directly below, over the tree tops, are the roofs of Castries and the blue harbour. Beyond is the spit of land, La Vigie, lying on the sea as a model in clay would lie on a sheet of violet glass. Then comes a stretch of sea coast so enchanting that it might be the shore of a happier world. It ends in the famous bay of Gros Islet where Rodney anchored his fleet before the great fight of April 12, 1782.

In the far haze is Pigeon Island, a pale, conical rock standing out of the sea. This is the little island that Rodney fortified to the great discomfort of the French, as well as the perch from which

[1] Fortescue's *History of the British Army*, vol. iv : London, 1906.

he watched, with such good effect, the movements of the enemy. Yet it is a place only three-quarters of a mile long and much less than that in width. It once had barracks for six officers and one hundred men, or for as many of the hundred as had survived death from yellow fever.

A little way down the side of the Morne Fortuné is the officers' cemetery. The road leading to it, which was once so well worn, is now overgrown with grass. Round about the cluster of graves is a thicket of sand-box trees, while beyond the trees is a home-suggesting stretch of open sea. This ever silent gathering place of the British is the most beautiful spot on the side of the hill. A number of the graves are blackened with age. Some are of stone, others of weather-worn brick. Most of them tell the same story—the roll-call of the Yellow Death, the major of this regiment or the lieutenant of that, and so many of them mere lads.

The loss of life among the British troops in the West Indies and notably in St. Lucia, was in those days appalling. The majority of the deaths was due to yellow fever. After Sir Ralph Abercromby's attack on the Morne in 1796 Sir John Moore was left in command of the island with a garrison of 4000 men. This was in June. When November came the force had been reduced by yellow fever to 1000 fit for duty and 1500 sick.[1] When the English were compelled to leave St. Lucia in 1795 among the total force of 1400 there were no less than 600 sick, nearly one-half, while on the very day of embarkation one officer and seven men died.

The whole campaign, lasting from 1793 to 1796, resulted in "the total of 80,000 soldiers lost to the service, including 40,000 actually dead; the latter number exceeding the total losses of Wellington's army from death, discharges, desertion and all causes from the beginning to the end of the Peninsular War."[2]

It was during the year 1794 that the mortality was the highest. Men were dying in numbers every day, in Guadaloupe at the rate of 300 a month. Of General Grey's original force of 7000 men at least 5000 perished in the course of this one year.[3] Taking the

[1] Fortescue's *History of the British Army*, vol. iv. [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*

army, navy and transport together, writes Fortescue, "it is probably beneath the mark to say that 12,000 Englishmen were buried in the West Indies in 1794."

The soldiers were badly housed and badly fed. Many were in rags. There was a lack of clothing, especially of boots; a lack, not only of comforts, but of the simple necessaries of life. The Home Government remained unmoved and unmovable. Either from indifference or incompetence the Secretary of State did nothing. Grey wrote letter after letter, but without avail. At last he sends home a message with this pitiable sentence, "You seem to have forgotten us."

In 1780 four newly raised regiments were ordered to Jamaica. They stopped on their way at St. Lucia, where they contracted yellow fever. By the time the transports reached Kingston Harbour they had lost 168 men by death, and had 780 on the sick list. During the course of the first five months, after the survivors had been stationed at Jamaica, 1100 more had died of the fever and of other diseases. It was then that Dalling, the Governor, ventured to place the matter before the Secretary of State in a way that he thought would appeal to his intelligence. He writes as follows: "Considered only as *an article of commerce* these 1100 men have cost 22,000*l.*, a sum which, if laid out above ground, might have saved half their lives."

It is, and always will be, a gruesome and discreditable story. If ever, on some silent tropical night, there should be heard again on the Morne Fortuné the tramp of the sentry by the barrack wall and the challenge of the guard at the outpost, and if ever the stir of human life should waken among these blackened graves, the voice that would call from the summit of the hill would utter those reproachful words, "You seem to have forgotten us."

XXIV.

CASTRIES AND ITS PEOPLE.

CASTRIES, in spite of its chequered and unrestful history, is not interesting. It sprawls upon a flat at the foot of the hills, a poor meagre place, quite out of keeping with its superb surroundings. The houses are mostly of wood. Those who built them would appear to have been dissatisfied with the world, and to have had little heart to make their homes either comely or long-abiding. The quay, although gloomy with the coal-dust of half a century, can claim to provide a good background for the women folk of Castries who, when in their gala dress, are as gorgeous as red and blue macaws. There is a dejected square in the centre of the town which looks as if it were up for sale. It has around it, however, some "ornamental trees" planted by Sir Dudley Hill about 1834, which help to cover its nakedness.

Even now it would need a very unscrupulous estate agent to make it appear that Castries was a place of "desirable residence." In days not long gone by it was famous for its reckless death-rate. Its insalubrity was due to many things, to swamps which bred malaria, to yellow fever, to a contempt for drainage, and to the cheapness of a fiery drink called "white rum."

The ill repute of the town was, according to Breen,[1] once made use of to dispose of an inconvenient guest. The historian of St. Lucia states that, early in the 'thirties, the bishop of the diocese, in the course of his tour, reached Castries. He was naturally asked to dine at Government House. The hour for dinner would probably have been about four in the afternoon. The Governor then in residence was a mean man who had many

[1] *St. Lucia*, by H. H. Breen: London, 1844.

reasons for not wishing to take the bishop and his suite into Government House. Apart from the mere question of economy the Governor's wife and family were in England and the establishment had been reduced to the barest possible compass. After dinner the Governor essayed to show the bishop over the building and in the course of the survey treated him, it may be imagined, to some such converse as the following: "This is the best bedroom, bishop. It was here that my predecessor died of yellow fever. You will remember him—a most genial man. Look out for this step in the passage! We found it a very awkward corner for a coffin. This next room has a charming view of the sea; the bedstead is a specimen of creole work. Poor old Colonel Smithson had his worst fit on that bed; took two men to hold him; poor dear man, he has now been paralysed three years. This third bedroom we call the red room: it gets the morning sun. I hope you admire the curtains, they came from England. Here poor Morris, my secretary, died. He seems to have got typhoid fever in the house, although we are *most* careful. A short illness, poor fellow! I bought his horse, that roan you saw at the door. Now you must come upstairs and see the blue room and the fine outlook over the town. It was where poor Major Jones died when he was here on a visit. Abscess of the liver, you will recollect. Dreadful case! You could hear his groans down in the smoking-room."

But the bishop did not want to see any more nor to hear any more. He ordered his horse and rode down into the town, reflecting as he went on the uncertainty of life—at least, in Government House. After he had gone the one man-servant probably found the Governor alone in the smoking-room chuckling to himself about "a house with a reputation."

At set seasons Castries was liable to be raided by hurricanes, or to be paralysed by earthquakes. The householder in this peculiarly unquiet town was prepared at any time to see his roof torn away by a tornado, or his windows shaken like dust into the road by an earthquake, or a coffin carried into his door by callous men who "had come for the body." It is no wonder if the citizens became neurotic. "The slightest shock (of earthquake),"

writes Breen, "drives the people into the streets, throwing the gentlemen out of their windows and their wits, and the ladies into holes and hysterics."

Never, indeed, could one find

Calm and deep peace on this high wold.

A body of looting soldiers in the streets duly heated with white rum, a rising of the negroes bent on arson and murder, or the bombardment of the Morne were events to be expected only from time to time, but never was there immunity from the snakes, the centipedes, the scorpions, the tarantulas, the mosquitoes and the wasps with which the island was overrun in Breen's time.

St. Lucia will always be notable in books on natural history as the favourite haunt of that "abominable reptile" the *Fer-de-Lance*, or yellow viper, the "Death of the Woods." Of all venomous snakes this execrable creature is the fiercest, most aggressive and most deadly. The very name the "Yellow Viper" would seem to be as loathsome a title as could be invented for a living thing, and if a tenth of the stories told about it be true it deserves any ignominy. It has a low, flat head, triangular in shape. Its skin affects the yellow-brown tint of decomposition. "The iris of the eye is orange, with red flashes: it glows at night like burning charcoal. In a walk through the woods at any moment a seeming branch, a knot of lianas, a pink or gray root, a clump of pendent yellow fruit, may suddenly take life, writhe, stretch, spring, strike."[1]

Castries is still distinctly a French town in spite of its long occupation by the British. The negroes talk a fearful patois, "a jargon of lop-sided French and maimed English, flavoured with the Ethiopian twang." A large proportion of them own to French names, but a negro's name is an uncertain guide as to the nationality he may have adopted. Breen furnishes an illustration of this. Monsieur Jean Marie Beauregard, a coal-black negro, comes to think Jean Marie too vulgar, so he takes to himself the more refined name of Alfred. His friends find Beauregard too

[1] *Two Years in the French West Indies*, by Lafcadio Hearn, pp. 56 and 57: New York, 1890.

long, so he becomes Monsieur Alfred and his wife Madame Alfred. In this manner an apparently new family is founded.

The population of St. Lucia may be precisely described as "mixed"—mixed both as to nationality and colour. There is every tint of skin, from ebony to jessamine white. Picturesque mulattos are here of all grades of yellow or brown, fair creoles who may claim descent from ancient French families, or who may trace their ancestry back to some adventurous Scots who left their villages in the Highlands at the bidding of the call of the sea.

Certain black folk in St. Lucia are descendants of the Passparterres—the come-by-land people. They were refugees from Martinique, who fled from that island when it was French to St. Lucia when it was British. They kept secret the method of their escape from slavery as well as the means whereby they reached St. Lucia. "How had they come?" asked the meddlesome and inquisitive. "They had come by land" was the courteous answer of the grinning stranger. Thus it was that they were called the Passparterres. As the English would never give these refugees up to the French, they remained free men and became, in many cases, desirable settlers and citizens.

Breen had so long an experience of the West Indian negro, that his account of him is worthy of attention. He describes the black man as gay, good-humoured, docile and sober, generous and fond of children, "submissive but never obsequious, active but not laborious, superstitious but not religious, addicted to thieving without being a rogue, averse to matrimony yet devoted to several wives." His profound capacity for indolence he illustrates in the following manner: "A negro espies his fellow at the end of the street, and rather than join him in a *tête-à-tête* he will carry on a conversation with him for several hours at the top of his voice, to the unspeakable annoyance, perhaps the scandal, of all those who may occupy the intermediate houses. Should the wind blow off his hat he will continue the conversation, and let someone else pick it up for him; or if he condescends to notice the occurrence will walk leisurely after it until it meets with some natural obstruction."[1]

[1] *St. Lucia*, by H. H. Breen, page 203: London, 1844.

SOUFRIÈRE, ST. LUCIA—THE LANDING PLACE.

It was into the harbour of Castries that there crept on May 8, 1902, an unexpected and woeful-looking steamer. She came slowly, as if in pain, her screw labouring through the water with much moaning and creaking. She was grey and ghost-like. Every scrap of paint had been burnt from her sides, or was hanging from the bare iron like flaps of skin. Her ropes were charred; the planks of her charthouse were blackened. A fainting man at the wheel clung to the spokes to prevent himself from falling. His face was so blistered that his eyes were nearly shut; his hair was singed close to his skull; his hands were raw and bleeding; his clothes scorched into something that was black and brittle. The decks of the ship were like a grey sand-dune, for upon them were many tons of still hot ashes. There were horrible shapes lying muffled in this dust—the bodies of dead men who were covered with cinders as with a shroud. This was the steamship *Roddam*, the only vessel that escaped from the fearful disaster which had overwhelmed the town and harbour of St. Pierre.

Towards the south of the island is the curious little town of Soufrière, lying in the bend of a glorious bay whose blue depths are such that an anchor, to reach the bottom, would need from 300 to 600 feet of cable. This haphazard village of wooden shanties is placed at the mouth of a green valley which is making its way seawards. The place has a look of unreality appropriate to some "pirates' lair" in a scene at a theatre. The stepping forth of a *corps de ballet* and a crowd of much rouged buccaneers would hardly excite surprise.

On the occasion of the steamer's visit the motley inhabitants came down to the beach *en masse*, jostling and grinning, men, women and children, hazy dotards and naked infants. From under the trees, from out of quaint streets and lanes they poured to the water's edge, where they crowded about the primitive boats and the piles of gaudy fish on the beach. The children crawled and wriggled to the front as if the Pied Piper of Hamelin were calling them from the bay. Over the sea of heads, heads of woolly hair, heads covered with brilliant turbans, golf caps, sombreros, straw hats without brims and felt hats without crowns, it was possible to see into the town and to see that it was empty, save, perhaps, for

one single belated woman who, having picked up a forgotten baby, was rushing helter-skelter to the shore.

The population of the settlement is given as 2300. Whatever it might be, I am convinced that we saw the entire number on the beach that day, excepting only the bedridden and the moribund.

On the south of the cove are the two famous pyramidal or tooth-shaped rocks, the Pitons, which rise to the height respectively of 2460 and 2620 feet. They are sheer, isolated and terrible, with the aspect of Titanic mountain peaks which have been removed and cast into the sea. They are partly covered with trees which hold on to the rock face in some miraculous fashion. The appearance of this almost vertical forest provokes a sense of dizziness. The root of one tree may be on a level with the top of the one just below it, each clinging to a narrow ledge on a sheer wall.

Some little way inland, behind the opera-bouffe town, are the sulphur springs of Soufrière. The same are thus described by Mr. Paton [1]: "We came to the verge of a yawning gulf, a mile or more in circumference, whose sides rose perpendicularly, in fact almost overhung the dismal abyss, at the bottom of which, two or three hundred feet below us, we could see many springs boiling amid rocks that looked like the ruins of ancient lime kilns. Issuing from these pits were clouds of fetid steam, noisome exhalations, causing destruction of vegetation near the pits and blackening the rocks on which they condensed. It was a most uncanny sort of place, desolate, infernal in aspect, and to the leeward of this Avernus the grass and blighted vegetation for a long distance all around were discoloured and stained, which gave them the appearance of lying continually under the shadow of a dense cloud."

King Louis XVI. caused baths and appropriate buildings to be erected near these springs "for the use of his Majesty's troops in the Windward Islands." In the course of time a quite extensive spa was established about a mile from the town. Invalids came

[1] *Down the Islands*, page 265: London, 1888.

hither from all parts, even from France, in spite of the dangerous and weary journey. They came to the spa because it was new, little known, and a long way off. As is the habit of the sick they were attracted by something pungent to smell and disgusting to drink, and by mysterious modes of bathing, associated with some suggestion of the rites of sorcery. They were attracted also by that pathetic belief in the miraculous and the supernatural which figures ever in the despairing creed of stricken men and women.

XXV.

THE SONG OF CASIMIR DELAVIGNE.

THE history has yet to be written which will deal with the effects of the French Revolution upon the people in the French West Indies, and, at the same time, tell of the strange activities it aroused and of the bizarre ends to which it led.

The greater number of the inhabitants of these islands were negroes who were living in a not-oppressive slavery. To them came, with much shouting and with an unfamiliar shaking of hands, the knowledge that they were "men and brothers." The information flattered their pride even though it was conveyed in terms of some ambiguity. The tricolour was planted on the island fort. There was much strange speech in the streets and on the quays, yelled by loud-voiced men standing on sugar tubs. It was very pleasant: it was an inspiring change, and when in 1794 slavery was abolished in the French West Indies there was a practical outcome for a deal of talk.

There entered, at this time, into the negro's life an indefinite joy embodied in the term "the rights of man." The phrase was comforting, full of sweet promise and wild possibilities. It was not precisely construed, but there was in it some hint of eternal idleness, some forecast of that basking in the sun which, in the negro's creed, represents "the whole duty of man" as well as the eternal privilege of the angels. The "rights of man" included not only bawling in the streets and lounging on the quay side, but they embraced free access to rum, some acquiring of that property which was common to the Brotherhood, and the occasional diversion of seeing a planter's mill in flames.

Amongst other effects of the Revolution was an abhorrence of the unenlightened English. That people did not embrace the negro with brotherly arms, nor did they profess any knowledge of the "rights of man." They so believed in "good, old-fashioned" slavery for the negro that when a French island was captured the coloured folk found themselves once again in bondage. Thus it came about that, at this period, the black man sided with the French whenever war was in progress. Abercromby in his attack upon the islands in 1796 found himself opposed, not only by his old friends the French, but also by their new friends the negroes. The English, when they had taken St. Lucia, learnt that their endeavours were by no means at an end as soon as they had conquered the Morne Fortuné and had pulled down the French flag.

There was peace on the hill but not in the woods. In the forests was a hidden army, silent, desperate and venomous. It was made up of runaway slaves, of negroes whom the Revolution had set free, and of escaped or deserting French soldiers. These were the brigands or bushrangers who introduced the Reign of Terror into many a smiling island. So full of hate were they, so merciless, so driven to extremes, that they became more deadly than the yellow vipers that slunk around their bivouacs. The chronicles of that invisible army were rich in murders and ambuscades, in kidnapping, man-hunting and cattle-raiding. They avoided battle, being content to count as their victories the burning homestead, the planter stabbed in the back, the mutilated woman and the dismembered child.

The leader of the brigands in St. Lucia was one Lacroix, who, in his communications to Sir John Moore, styled himself "Commandant de l'Armée Française dans les bois." "The Army in the Wood!" a battalion of half-naked negroes, armed with knives and bludgeons, of famished and unshaven white men with the rags of the uniforms of France hanging from their limbs, their muskets rusty, and their eyes aflame from the last orgy on rum. A company of these men, squatting in a clearing in the forest to discuss fresh schemes of murder, must have appeared—from their

hungry looks and savage growls—no other than a gathering of wer-wolves.

The Revolution of July 1830, modest as it was, led to results in the Far West which were wholly unexpected. It was by the uprising in July that the people in Paris deposed Charles X. and placed Louis-Philippe in his place upon the throne. It is not easy to see how a change in the reigning family, from the house of Bourbon to that of Orleans, could have concerned, or even interested, the negro labourers in a remote island like Martinique. What did, however, happen is very graphically told of by Breen in his "History of St. Lucia."

In the autumn of 1830, a French ship arrived at St. Pierre in Martinique, laden with heroes fresh from the streets and slums of Paris. The friends of Louis-Philippe, finding their master firmly seated on the throne, thought well to get rid of some of their tools. The most dangerous of these tattered king-makers they shipped across the seas to people Campeachy and other wilds in the New World. It was little matter where they went so long as it was far enough from Paris. The barque that carried this precious cargo had the appropriate name of the *Glaneuse*—the Gleaner. The harvest had been reaped, and it was well to clear the mowed field.

With the pious intention of introducing new blood among the inhabitants of Martinique the *Glaneuse* landed a number of these choice *citoyens* upon the quay of St. Pierre. They were the scum of Paris, such human froth as only the bubbling of a revolution can bring up from the depths—a crowd of reputed artisans, street loafers, *décrotteurs*, jail-birds, discharged soldiers, and those half-crazy folk who rush out of alleys to scream and wave banners whenever there is a rising of any kind in any city.

These "heroes of July" found, when they landed, that they were shunned by the respectable French of St. Pierre. They therefore hobnobbed with the negroes. The blacks were delighted and indeed honoured. For days and days, says Breen, "negroes and 'heroes of July' paraded the streets arm in arm, or caroused together in the beer-shops."

The new-comers told their black brethren of the glories of street fighting, of barricades made out of overturned wagons and coaches, of the joy of kneeling on a soldier's chest while you jagged his face with a broken bottle, of eyes ripped out upon the cheek by well-aimed flints, of the looting of taverns, of petroleum poured into cellars and followed by a lighted match. To the listeners this was delicious converse. The negro is theatrical in matters of the emotions, he is illogical and impulsive, for there is still a good deal of the savage in his blood.

The passengers from the *Glaneuse* had much to say that was inspiriting about the "rights of man." They brought with them also another phrase which more vividly impressed the heavy mind of the field labourer. They talked of "the will of the people." "Look," said the heroes of July, "what the people can do and have done! They alone are the power in the State! Is it all well with you, the people of Martinique?" The plantation hand answered that it was not well.

One thing more the men from Paris introduced to their negro friends. They brought with them Delavigne's song "La Parisienne." This had been the hymn of the Revolution. It had been yelled in defiant chorus by frantic mobs, had been sung solemnly at secret gatherings and often in a woman's sweet voice, had been hummed or whistled by a thousand stragglers through the panic-hushed streets of Paris. It was the war cry of the revolutionists, the chant that had led them to victory. Casimir Delavigne, the famous lyric poet, the author of "Les Vèpres Siciliennes," had little thought to what ends his song would lead.

Every negro in St. Pierre learnt the rhyme and sung it. It could be heard the day long, in the *cabaret*, in the streets, among the brakes of sugar-cane, on the solitary road.

Paris n'a plus qu'un cri de gloire :
En avant marchons
Contre leurs canons.
A travers le feu des bataillons,
Courons à la Victoire !

To suit local affairs and to indicate the objects of all hatred, the negro, in his singing, substituted for "leurs canons," "les colons."

En avant marchons
Contre les colons

became the refrain whenever no planters were near to hear.

Now began pleasant days for the coloured folk of St. Pierre. Under the guidance of their friends from the Emotional City they planned a revolution of their own. The rising was to be in February. They were then to enforce the will of the people and to make themselves immortal as the Heroes of Martinique. There were secret meetings at midnight on silent beaches and in glades of the forest, where the plotters talked in whispers and where oaths were sworn. There were all the delightful mysteries of passwords and signs, the covert understanding, the sense of power. Everywhere and at all times could Casimir Delavigne's song be heard in the air. It was the rumbling of the volcano.

The rising planned by the schemers broke out prematurely at St. Pierre on February 9, at seven in the evening. It began by the setting fire to eleven sugar plantations and to certain prominent houses outside the town. In a moment St. Pierre was in an uproar. The streets were alive with troops, both horse and foot, hurrying to the suburbs; with them were the gendarmes and such white men as happened to be in the city at the time and could carry arms. Sailors who had been landed from the various ships in the harbour came running up the narrow lanes at the double, cutlasses in hand. The alarm bell was ringing in the cathedral tower. Shops were shut and houses barricaded, while women rushed to and fro terrified by the cry "The negroes are coming!" Now and then a rider would gallop along the street with news of fresh horrors creeping upon the town. The glare of fire was in the sky while, far away above the hubbub and clatter, the refrain of Delavigne's song rose up from a thousand exulting throats.

The would-be heroes of Martinique were soon overcome. By 5 A.M. next morning the great revolution was over. Five hundred

arrests were made and out of the number taken twenty-two were condemned to death. The last phase of the sorry story is well described by Breen who was an eye-witness of it all.

"On May 19, the day appointed for the execution, the town of St. Pierre presented one of the most melancholy and heartrending spectacles ever exhibited in any country. Twenty-two human beings, having each a rope round his neck, were marched forth from the prison, near the Batterie Decnotz, escorted by soldiers, priests and policemen to the Place Bertin, where a gibbet sixty feet long had been erected for their execution. Several were foaming at the mouth, and by their gestures, language and looks manifested the working of the evil passions within. But the greater number appeared resigned to their fate, and were attentively listening to the exhortation of the clergy.

"The Place and every avenue leading to it were thronged with mounted gendarmes and troops of the line. On reaching the foot of the gallows the agitation of the wretched culprits assumed a frightful degree of intensity. The spell was now broken; the veil of delusion torn from their eyes; all their visions of glory had vanished; all their dreams of power and preponderance had dissolved, and nothing remained but the startling, shadowless reality of an ignominious death.

"The most remarkable actor in this tragic scene was a coloured man named Chéry, who had been the chief promoter of the insurrection. At the sight of the gibbet he gave himself up to the wildest despair, vomiting forth imprecations, both loud and deep, against the white inhabitants, and expressing his fervent hope 'that the island of Martinique might be swallowed up in the ocean before another generation should pass away.' He had just commenced 'En avant marchons' when the *bourreau*, shaking him by the rope that dangled on his back, said, pointing to the gallows, 'Voilà votre chemin!' Chéry grinned and gnashed his teeth; then tossing off his shoes in the air (one of which struck a gendarme with great violence on the face) he ran up the ladder to the head of the gallows, and in a few seconds was seen hanging without a struggle or a sigh.

"The others were then thrown off in succession, until the whole twenty-two were left hanging together at equal distances from each other. In an hour after the bodies were cut down, and a long and lowering day closed on this lugubrious spectacle, just as the twenty-two corpses, the destined food of sharks, were dropped into the sea at some distance from the beach."[1]

Thus, with the setting of the sun, there came an end to the song of Casimir Delavigne.

[1] *History of St. Lucia*, page 175.

XXVI.

MARTINIQUE.

TWENTY miles north of St. Lucia is the French island of Martinique. It can be seen from the heights above Castries whenever the sky is clear, a pillar of cloud resting on the sea, silver-grey at noon, lilac at sunset.

Columbus landed here one day in June 1502. It was a spot he was curious about, for he had heard of it on a previous voyage as the island of Matinino, where all the inhabitants were women. It was a strange legend, with some element of prophecy in it, for the Martinique of to-day is famous, above all, as the home of comely women. The men of the place are of no particular distinction, certainly of no interest—mere West Indian negroes and mulattoes. The women, on the other hand, are, as an American writer expresses it, "a race apart."

Like others of the volcanic isles Martinique is green and rugged—green with vast jungles, rugged with a thousand hills. "Although less than fifty miles in length and less than twenty in average breadth, there are upwards of four hundred mountains in the little island, or of what at least might be termed mountains elsewhere. These again are divided and interpeaked, and bear hillocks on their slopes." [1]

This island of "indescribable glory" is so fascinating that to those who know it best it is Le Pays des Revenants—The Country of the Comers-back. Martinique was colonised by the French in 1635, and although it was for many years a shuttlecock of war, and although the British seized it on four separate

[1] *Two Years in the French West Indies*, by Lafcadio Hearn, page 256: New York, 1890.

occasions, and indeed held it once for a period of six years, it has remained French to the backbone—as French as the town of Blois.

Fort de France, the capital, lies on a plain at the foot of low hills. From the bay there is little to be seen of it but a jumble of red roofs and palm trees, above which rises the spire of the cathedral. To the south of the town is an immense grey fort whose surly walls stand half in the water and half on land, an amphibious place already mouldy and rusty from neglect. This is the Fort St. Louis, which plays no small part in the annals of the British navy. On a height behind the town is a still larger and dingier fort, the Fort Bourbon. It sulks there, black and forbidding, coiled up like a colossal snake that had been driven out of the gay-coloured town. It was from the harbour of Fort de France (then Fort Royal Bay) that Count de Grasse sailed with his fleet to meet Rodney on the glorious 12th of April, 1782.

Fort de France, a prosperous place of 17,000 inhabitants, will occasion some surprise to the visitor who is acquainted only with the British possessions in these seas. Landing from a rowing-boat at a small pier on the fringe of the city he will find himself suddenly, in spite of palms and sand-box trees, in France and in the streets of a French country town. The chief street, Rue Saint-Louis, is typical of the place. Here are brightly painted houses with green jalousies and iron balconies, houses let in flats where women chat for ever out of windows, familiar French shops, the "Bazar Parisien," the "grand café" with its small tables, the restaurant with madame, fat and busy, sitting at a high desk. The very names of the streets are written in white letters on those plaques of blue enamelled iron which mark every Paris street corner. On any spare wall are the gaudy advertisements of the French provinces—the persistent *apéritif*, the marvellous hair wash, the unanatomical gloves and shoes, the everlasting *chocolat*.

Happy is he who reaches Fort de France for the first time on a Sunday. The streets are then thronged by a moving company as brilliant in colour as are the idlers at the foot of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Burmah. The crowd is composed mostly of

women. They present every tint of skin from white to ebony. Here are the heavy-featured but smiling negress, the girl with the "sapota" skin, the girl with cheeks of cinnamon or chocolate, the nut-brown maid, the matron with the skin of a fawn, the stately woman whose complexion has the sunny tint of an ear of ripe corn. The fairest of all is the *fille de couleur*, the darker are the quadroon and octoroon, the *métisse*, the *chabine* of Martinique. "A population fantastic, astonishing—a population of the Arabian Nights."[1] Some of these women are remarkably beautiful, tall, lissome, and statuesque, with rounded limbs, perfectly moulded necks and a fine carriage of the head. They walk erect with swaying hips, lithe and languorous, graciously, yet with just some suggestion of coquettishness. Here is a *porteuse*, a half-clad figure of bronze perfect in its modelling; and here are two girls holding baskets on their heads who are veritable Caryatides. Many have sad, regretful-looking eyes, many a mien of gentle dignity, others a bearing that is quite imperious.

There are few who are not bare-footed, and the rustle of their feet on the dry road is a sound the most enticing that human steps can make. It has its very opposite in the mechanical tramp of drilled men, and its complement in the clatter of Japanese clogs in a temple close. "Soundless as shadow," writes Hearn, "is the motion of all these naked-footed people. On any quiet mountain way, full of curves, where you fancy yourself alone, you may often be startled by something you *feel*, rather than hear, behind you,—surd steps, the springy movement of a long lithe body, dumb oscillations of raiment,—and ere you can turn to look, the haunter swiftly passes with creole greeting of 'bon-jou' or 'bonsoué, missié.'"

Their costumes mimic the daring colours of the tropical bird. A few of the womenfolk wear a long, trailing dress, the *douillette*, made in one piece from neck to foot; others a robe, over a white petticoat, a linen bodice and a foulard, or silk kerchief, across the shoulders. The head-dress is very picturesque. It consists of a "madras," an ample silk handkerchief wound about the head

[1] *Two Years in the French West Indies*, by Lafcadio Hearn: New York, 1890.

turban-fashion, and finished off by a projecting end, which stands up like the eagle's feather in an Indian's hair. The colour of the madras will be usually a canary-yellow or yellow striped with black. The hues of the dresses are bewildering. Here are a skirt of roses and a foulard of sky-blue, a gown of scarlet and yellow with a terra-cotta scarf across the breast, a dress of white striped with orange below a foulard of green, a frock of primrose spotted with red and completed by a scarf of mazarine blue. Add to this the necklace of gold beads, the heavy bracelets, the great earrings, and the "trembling pins" that fix the madras; and then realise, over all, the white light of a tropical noon.

Most of the women have come from the fast-emptying cathedral, bringing with them the odour of incense. Among the crowd are a few Europeans dressed in the costumes of Paris, and looking stiff and out of place. In the street also are dapper French soldiers and officials in white uniforms, gnarled country women with broad-brimmed hats, and a number of bronze men with naked chests, most of whom are bareheaded or are decked with a hat ostentatiously shapeless.

The crowd makes way for the nuns and their queue of school-girls, as they pass along the streets from the cathedral to the convent. The sombre robes of the nuns and their dead-white wimples contrast severely with the sensuous colours around them. The girls are all mulattoes, whose pretty brown faces are surmounted by turbans of royal purple. Their dresses are of one pattern, blue with white spots, very simple and demure.

One thing assuredly the French have taught the golden brown maiden of Martinique, and that is, how to dress with justice to her good looks and credit to her stately figure. Very striking is the comparison between these statuesque women and the "coloured lady" of Barbados, who has learnt to make herself ridiculous by a travesty of the fashions of London.

Even more bewildering in colour than the streets is the market-place, where are stalls covered with surprising fish, blue, green, scarlet, and gold, piles of brown fruits, heaps of yellow bananas, unfamiliar vegetables of unfamiliar shades of green, as well as a mound of silk scarves like a crumpled-up rainbow.

The cathedral is such an one as rises above the roofs of a hundred French towns. It is just as weather-worn without and as tawdry within, while from its steeple floats the same jangling chime of small-voiced bells. In an enclosure behind the church is the white figure of the Virgin from St. Pierre which miraculously escaped the cyclone of flame by which that town was overwhelmed.

Just outside the city is an unkempt, uncared-for common, dignified by the name of La Place de la Savane. It is meant to be a park, but it is no more than a piece of open ground where the loafer can sleep and where the children have worn away the grass in untidy patches. It boasts a meagre band-stand, such as a provincial townlet might set up in a moment of ambition, and then forget and leave—as this is left—bare even of paint.

In the centre of this Ishmaelitish waste, guarded by a clump of palms, is a very unexpected object—a white marble statue of a woman, an imperious woman, the Empress Josephine. She was born on the island at Trois Ilets, a village which lies hidden away in one of the many green creeks of Fort de France Bay. The charm of this tall, pale figure is irresistible. She is in the costume of the Empire, with bare neck and arms. On the cushion of her pretty hair rests a crown. Her left hand leans upon a medallion of Napoleon. She is raised aloft, against the blue sky, on a classic pedestal of white stone. The finding of this superb lady of courts and palaces, the châtelaine of Malmaison, on a poor patch of outcast land by a West Indian town is beyond words surprising. Her face is plaintive and tender, gracious and infinitely womanly. "Over violet space of summer sea, through the vast splendour of azure light, she is looking back to the place of her birth, back to beautiful drowsy Trois Ilets, and always with the same half-dreaming, half-plaintive smile—unutterably touching."[1]

Josephine was the eldest daughter of Joseph de La Pagerie, a lieutenant of artillery, who a few months after his marriage had helped to defend the island from an attack of the British in 1762. La Pagerie owned a plantation near the hamlet of Trois Ilets, and in the mansion upon the estate Josephine was born on June 23, 1763. She was educated at a convent at Fort de France (then

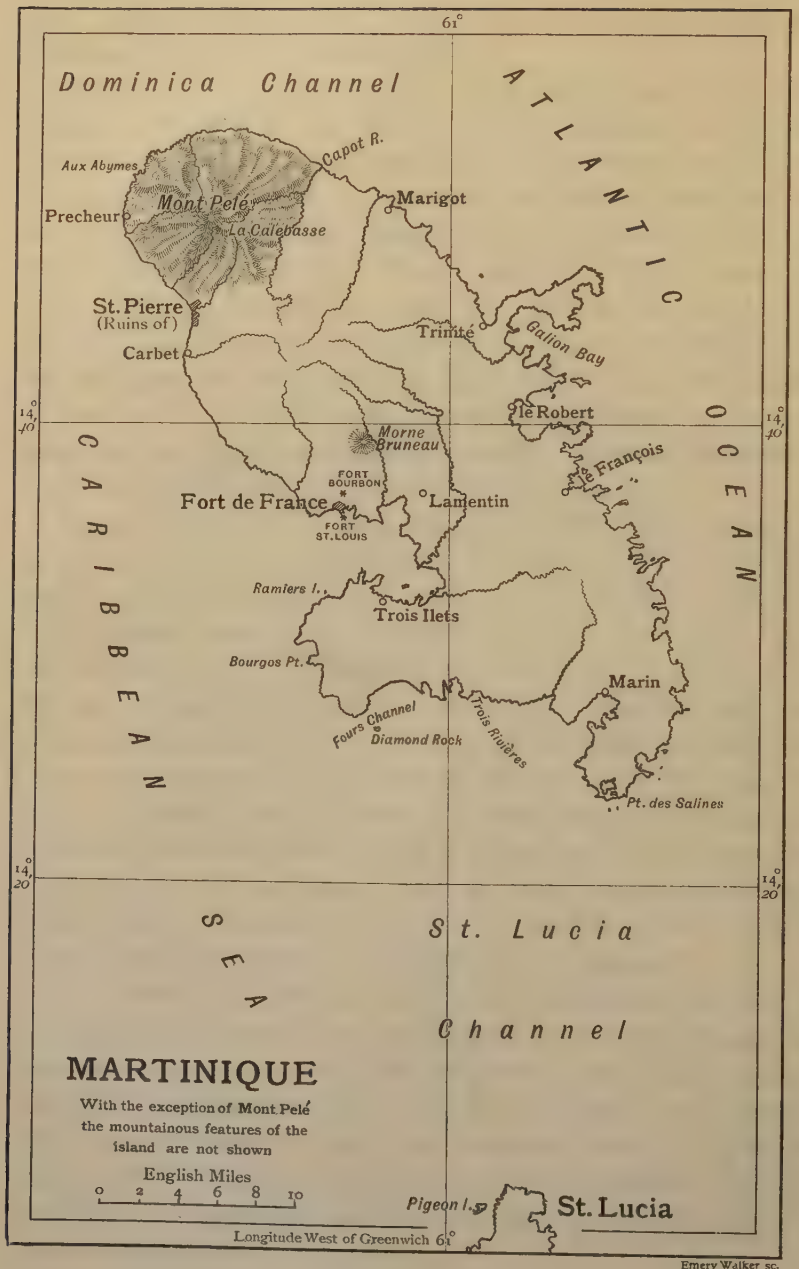
[1] *Two Years in the French West Indies*, by Lafcadio Hearn, page 66 : New York, 1890.

Fort Royal), leaving at the age of fifteen, by which time she had learnt little more from the "Dames de la Providence" than how to dance, to sing and to embroider.

Of the house in which Josephine was born nothing now remains except a fragment of the kitchen, for the building was totally destroyed by the fearful hurricane of 1766. The hurricane brought ruin upon the family as well as upon the house. The mansion was never rebuilt, and the planter, his wife and children, took up their abode in the *sucrerie*. This structure is still in existence, a low, shed-like building of stone, with dormer windows in the roof and a tall chimney at one end of it. Such is the only home that Josephine can have known at Trois Ilets. It is a remarkable contrast to the stately house at Malmaison with its many-mirrored salons, its exquisite gardens and pleasances. It was at Malmaison, it will be remembered, that the deserted Empress died.

She left Martinique in 1779, at the age of sixteen, to marry a son of the Marquis de Beauharnais, the one-time governor of the island. She landed at Havre. After her separation from her husband Josephine returned to Trois Ilets. This was in 1788, when she was twenty-five. She stayed in the island two years, when she joined Beauharnais again and remained with him until his execution, at the time of the Terror, in 1794. After his death she was reduced to great straits for money, living with her two children in a very humble house in Paris. The story need not be retold of her meeting with Napoleon, or how it came about that she married him in 1799. He was then a man of thirty and she a woman of thirty-six. He writes to her as his "dear little wife," and is always wondering "what is the secret of her influence."

She must have been a woman of remarkable fascination, clever and the mistress of consummate tact. Conspicuous among her many fine traits are her tenderness and warm-hearted amiability. As Napoleon said, "She had no more sense of resentment than a pigeon." One most womanly quality—a love of pretty clothes—possessed her to the very end of her days, for Madame de Rémusat has said that "she died covered with ribbons and pale rose satin."



Emery Walker sc.

XXVII.

"NO FLINT" GREY AND THE STONE SHIP.

As the steamer sails into Fort de France Bay there will be noticed, just off the southern point of the harbour, a minute island lying close to the shore. This is Ilet à Ramiers, or the Wood Pigeons' Island. It is very insignificant, being only about 100 feet high and 300 feet in circumference at the summit, yet it played a remarkable part in some of the hardest fighting that Fort de France [1] ever saw.

It was in February 1794 that the trouble began, and, of course, the British were at the bottom of it. General Grey had come, in fact, to Martinique to capture it, bringing with him nineteen ships and 7000 soldiers. Now the first thing that stood in his way was this very Wood Pigeons' Island. Its name is deceptive; for it was equipped by the French with no less than twenty-two heavy guns, its stores of ammunition were abundant, and, above all, it was furnished with the necessary appliances for heating shot. So long as little Ramiers was capable of firing twenty-two cannon balls at a time, whether red-hot or not, it was impossible for any ship to enter the harbour. Grey did not wish to leave his nineteen vessels out in the open, and as he could not creep in by the north shore on account of Fort St. Louis he determined that the battery on Ilet à Ramiers must cease to be.

He landed a force, far away on the south of the island, at three points, Marin, Trois Rivières and Pointe Bourgos. He then marched to the headland overlooking Pigeon Island, fighting as he went. If it be remembered that Martinique was then little more than a heap of hills and pathless forest, this was no small achieve-

[1] Then called Fort Royal.

ment. He occupied a morne some 400 yards from the island. To the summit of this height he dragged his guns after two days of prodigious labour. He then had Ilet à Ramiers in the hollow of his hand. He bombarded it until he silenced it, whereupon the British fleet crept into the harbour by the southern shore, out of reach of the guns of St. Louis. (See Map.)

So far this was well, but to gain possession of Martinique it was necessary that Grey should capture St. Pierre and take the Forts Bourbon and St. Louis. To effect these ends another force was landed on the east coast at Galion Bay. Here it broke up into two detachments. One party made for Morne Bruneau, a hill commanding Fort Bourbon ; the other started for St. Pierre. This march of the English upon St. Pierre was probably the most remarkable feat ever accomplished in any West Indian campaign. The troops went by the coast to the Capot River, then turning westwards they climbed up 4000 feet to the pass of La Calebasse, hard by the very crater of Mont Pelé. Thence they descended to St. Pierre and took that cheerful town without resistance. This famous march was astounding in many ways. It was made through an unknown country under a tropical sun. The invaders had to find their way across miles of jungle, had to clamber up precipitous hills and crawl down into black ravines. Every fort and redoubt they came upon they had to take, and did take.

The method of their fighting was as astonishing as the obstinacy of their advance. They were armed, of course, with flint-lock muskets. Now General Grey had a prejudice against the firing of guns by soldiers. He considered the proceeding slow, wasteful and noisy, and, when employed to fight men who were ensconced behind earthworks or fort walls, a measure far from satisfactory. He believed in the bayonet, in the eighteen inches of cold steel. Shouting and volley firing were very effective on the parade ground, but for actual fighting his faith was in clenched teeth and a blade of good old Sheffield steel. Before commencing any march, therefore, the General's first care was to remove the flints from his men's muskets so that they advanced into a hostile country armed only with bayonets. When an outpost was reached

there were two courses open to Grey's soldier, either to stand still and be shot down or to rush the slope at the point of the bayonet and so get the business over. Thus it was that this redoubtable general received the nickname of "No flint" Grey.

The French regarded "No flint" Grey and his men with unfeigned dislike. This new British mode of attacking a fortified place was nothing less than hideous. The Frenchman, peeping out from behind a gabion, was rather inspired by the sound of firearms. There was the noise of battle to cheer him as well as a cloud of smoke to hide much that he had no great desire to see. Moreover, to make an assault under musket fire effective, it must be carried out in the daylight. The attack at the point of the bayonet by "No flint" Grey was by choice undertaken at night.

Such an assault was awful to contemplate. It meant invisible men creeping up to trenches in the dark and in silence. The defender of the redoubt would have a fearful sense of *something* advancing through the gloom, something gliding towards him like a black mist. He would wish to fire off his piece or to shout, merely to break the benumbing silence. Then would come the rustle of unseen bushes, the snapping of a twig, the crunch of a nailed boot on a stone, sounds a thousand times more terrifying than the rattle of a hundred muskets. He knew that the next moment would be heard the rushing of feet, and the pump-like sough of panting breath; then a claw of a hand would grip the parapet of earth, gleaming eyes would rise out of the mirk, and finally a great and awful figure would spring up with a death-cold bayonet and a half-muttered English oath. It is little to be wondered if the Martinique soldier thought he could better face the devil than "No flint" Grey.

In the memorable march to St. Pierre many entrenched positions were taken in this fashion. The very last redoubt to be stormed was rushed at two o'clock in the morning, at an hour when the courage of a man who watches is apt to be at its chilliest. It is needless to tell how Fort Bourbon and Fort St. Louis were taken, or how the island passed into the possession of the British. The account of this daring and splendid feat of arms

has been vividly described by Fortescue in his "History of the British Army." [1]

It is only necessary to devote one word to the fall of the great fortress of St. Louis. This fort, as has been already mentioned, juts out into the sea. The taking of it, therefore, was a matter for the fleet to handle. If the orthodox procedure had been followed, the men-of-war would have approached the works near enough to have bombarded them. During the manœuvre they would themselves have formed easy targets for the gunners on the seaward bastion. The spirit of "No flint" Grey had, however, taken hold of the sailor-men. They recognised that the regulation method of dealing with the fort would be tedious and unexciting.

So Captain Faulkner, with no more ado, put all sail upon his ship the *Zebra*, and making full tilt for the fort and its line of cannon, ran his vessel aground against the very walls of the battery. Boats and men were ready for the escalade, so while the unhappy *Zebra* heeled over as if in a swoon, the captain and his crew tumbled over the side and in a few minutes they were swarming up the sea-wall of the fort, hanging on to any gaps between the stones, or to any tufts of weed, using their comrades' shoulders as a mounting step until they could climb in through the gun embrasures. They carried with them cutlasses and boarding pikes, but the Frenchmen, liking these weapons no better than the bayonet, threw down their arms and watched with mingled feelings the unfurling of the British flag above the fort.

There is one other spot in Martinique which is so full of brave memories that it can never be passed by a Briton without a tribute of pride to the sailors of bygone days. Off the south-west corner of the island is an uninviting rock called in the charts Diamant Rock. It is bare and smooth like a bent knuckle. Its weather-stained sides are grey, shaded with pink. It is inaccessible except at a small spot on the west side. That any living thing but a seabird could reach its summit—which is 574 feet above the water-level—would seem improbable.

[1] Vol. iv.

Now in 1803, when Admiral Hood was doing battle with the French in these parts, he found that the enemy's ships were constantly escaping from him through the Fours channel which lies between this rock and Diamant Point. So he laid his seventy-four, the *Centaur*, alongside the pyramid of stone for the purpose of placing a battery on its summit. It seemed a mad scheme enough. But his men clambered somehow to the top of the rock, dragging ropes and tackles with them. These they dangled over the precipice down to the *Centaur's* deck. In the course of time a gun, swinging in the air like a dead minnow on a line, was being hauled up the sheer wall. Other cannon followed, by the same aerial route, until at last on the top there was a battery composed of three long twenty-fours and two eighteens. It would have been little surprise to the islanders if these men, who looked like ants on a boulder, had pulled up the *Centaur* herself after the guns.

One hundred and twenty men and boys were landed, under the command of Lieutenant James Maurice, to garrison the fort. The boys, it may be imagined, had the best time of their lives. James Maurice made creditable use of his exalted position. He swept the sea with his cannon and did a woeful deal of damage, as the French were compelled to allow. His rock was entered in the Admiralty books as "H.M. Ship, Diamond Rock." For sixteen weeks he held the post to the joy of his comrades. The old admiral had a face as keen and fierce as an east wind, but whenever he looked towards the Fours channel a very generous smile must have swept over his tough features.

At last his Majesty's ship "Diamond Rock" had to haul down her flag for the very good reason that the powder was exhausted and the water-tanks dry. Even when reduced to this discouraging plight the rock dwellers did not yield meekly, for at the very last it took two French seventy-fours, a frigate, a corvette, a schooner, and eleven gunboats to bring them to surrender. The commandant of the stone ship, when he handed his sword to the French captain, may well have apologised for all the trouble he had given.

XXVIII.

THE CITY THAT WAS.

ST. PIERRE, the debonair, the adored city of Martinique, was swept off the earth by the fearful eruption of Mont Pelé in the month of May 1902. The chronicles of the town, as well as the many views of it which survive, make it evident that St. Pierre was one of the most delectable abodes of men in the West Indies. It stood in a blue bay, along a beach bent like a bow, with green hills behind it and the towering mass of the awful mountain on its northern side.

There was one man at least for whom the ill-fated city had an irresistible fascination—Lafcadio Hearn—for he writes of it as one under a spell. To him it was ever "the quaint, whimsical, wonderfully coloured little town . . . the sweetest, queerest, darlingest little city in the Antilles."[1] No description of the place can be more vivid, more affectionate than that given by his pen. This is his account of the Grande Rue, the Rue Victor Hugo, and of the town generally :

"A bright, long, narrow street rising towards a far mass of glowing green. Not a street of this age, but of the seventeenth century ; a street of yellow façades, with yellow garden walls between the façades. In sharp bursts of blue light the sea appears at intervals—blue light blazing up old, old flights of mossy steps descending to the bay. And through these openings ships are visible, far below, riding in azure.

"Walls are lemon colour ; quaint balconies and lattices are green. Palm trees rise from courts and gardens into the warm

[1] *Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn*, vol. i. pages 413 and 415 : London, 1906.

blue sky, indescribably blue, that appears almost to touch the feathery heads of them. And all things within or without the yellow vista are steeped in a sunshine electrically white, in a radiance so powerful that it lends even to the pavements of basalt the glitter of silver ore." [1]

"Everywhere rushes mountain water—cool and crystal-clear, washing the streets;—from time to time you come to some public fountain flinging a silvery column to the sun, or showering bright spray over a group of black bronze tritons or bronze swans. The Tritons on the Place Bertin you will not readily forget; their curving torsos might have been modelled from the forms of those ebon men who toil there tirelessly all day in the great heat, rolling hogsheads of sugar or casks of rum. And often you will note, in the course of a walk, little drinking-fountains contrived in the angle of a building, or in the thick walls bordering the bulwarks or enclosing public squares; glittering threads of water spurting through lion-lips of stone.

"Seen from the bay the little red-white-and-yellow city forms but one multi-coloured streak against the burning green of the lofty island. There is no naked soil, no bare rock; the chains of the mountains, rising by successive ridges towards the interior, are still covered with forests." [2]

The town—as may be gathered—was built on rising tiers, mounting up the hillside. The higher quarters were reached by steep flights of steps, such as one sees in many an old Italian sea-town. These stone stairs did not lack for pretty names. One still to be found among the ruins was known as La Rue Monte-au-Ciel. The streets were narrow because shade is comfortable. They were well paved and trim. Besides the substantial and imposing cathedral there were other churches in the town, a bishop's palace, a convent, great military barracks, fine public buildings, and certain ancient forts. On the banks of the Roxe-lane river, with its many bridges, and in the suburbs beyond were bright painted villas and dainty gardens.

[1] *Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn*, vol. i. page 100.
[2] *Two Years in the French West Indies*, pages 37 and 52: New York, 1890.

The town had been famous for its Jardin des Plantes; it supported a large theatre and other places of amusement. Its chief joy, however, was the Place Bertin—an open promenade by the sea—where were the fountains Hearn describes, and where the *gandins* loved to disport themselves on high days and holidays. There was also the *mouillage*—the landing-place—where, from under the shade of trees, the idler could watch the rolling to and fro of casks, the hauling of ropes, and the unloading of ships. The city was prosperous and well esteemed, bustling with life, rippling with gaiety. It may be that it was a little prone to pleasure, and that it did not strive tediously after a high reputation for morality. If this be true, the same has been said of the gay and careless town of Pompeii.

The population numbered about 20,000, and the women of St. Pierre, while they were of the same engaging types as their sisters of Fort de France, are reputed to have excelled even them in handsome looks.

It was on May 8 that the town was destroyed. For many days before that date the great mountain had been showing signs of angry uneasiness. Strange clouds of cauliflower shape rose out of the crater. Terrible cannonadings were to be heard, while upon the city there drifted, from time to time, a haze of fine ash borne along by a hot and suffocating wind. On May 5 an avalanche of boiling mud, many acres wide, tumbled down from the volcano, and went roaring along the bed of the Rivière Blanche at the rate of a mile a minute. A large sugar factory was engulphed and some 150 lives lost. The torrent poured into the sea, throwing up fountains of steam, as if a lake of molten iron had been emptied into the deep.

The final cataclysm that struck the city with utter desolation took place at 7.52 on the morning of Thursday, May 8. It was witnessed by a cable-ship lying some miles out at sea, and by people who lived upon such neighbouring hills as were beyond the range of the destroying force.[1]

[1] An excellent account of the catastrophe will be found in *Mont Pelé and the Tragedy of Martinique*, by Angelo Heilprin: Philadelphia, 1903.

Suddenly, without warning of any kind, the summit of the mountain seemed to open, and from the lurid rent there burst a violet-grey cloud, the forepart of which was luminous and brilliant. It was shot from the torn crater as a charge from a cannon. It struck the town with terrific force, and then spread out over the sea and the hills. Loud detonations were heard. The flames in the cloud, as it swept along, were whirled into eddies and twisted into spirals.

In a moment the whole of St. Pierre was ablaze from a thousand points. In another moment everything—the city, the near hills, the bay—was blotted out by an impenetrable black cloud of smoke and ash, which veiled the sun and hid the awful deed under the darkness of night.

Thus in a few seconds was a town swept off the face of the earth, and 30,000 people left charred and dead.

The force of the destructive blast must have been prodigious. Whole streets of houses were mown down by the flaming scythe. Walls three to four feet in thickness were blown away by the furnace blast like things of lath, while massive machinery was crumpled up as if it had been gripped and crushed by a titanic hand. The town was raked by a veritable tornado of fire, by a hurricane of incandescent dust and of super-heated vapour. It came down upon the ships in the harbour like a breaking wave, striking the *Roddam* broadside with such violence as to nearly capsize her. The bodies of all those who were found among the ruins were bare of clothing, the garments having been simultaneously charred and blown away by the withering wind.

The area of total destruction of life was about eight square miles, but outside this was an extensive district known as the "singed zone." Out of the eighteen ships in the harbour one alone escaped—the *Roddam* (page 127). She had only come in at 7 A.M. on that very morning, and had fortunately been ordered to the quarantine station some distance off.

The only human being spared the universal holocaust was a prisoner in the dungeon of the city jail, a negro named Auguste Ciparis. The dungeon—still to be seen—is on that side of the

prison which is away from La Pelée. It was sheltered by a high wall and had itself a domed roof of stone and plaster. There was a heavy door to the small building but no window. An iron grating, some two feet above the door, alone admitted light and air to the cell. The account that Ciparis gave of his unparalleled experiences is told by Heilprin in the following words :[1]

"He was waiting for his usual breakfast on the 8th, when it suddenly grew dark, and immediately afterwards hot air, laden with ash, entered his room through the door-grating. It came gently but fiercely. His flesh was instantly burned, and he jumped about in agony, vainly calling for help. The heat that scorched him was intense, but lasted for an instant only, and during that time he almost ceased to breathe. There was no accompanying smoke, no noise of any kind, and no odour to suggest a burning gas. Ciparis was clad at the time in hat, shirt and trousers, but his clothing did not take fire; yet beneath his shirt the back was terribly burned. . . . For three days and more he was without food of any kind, and his only sustaining nourishment was the water of his cell." It was not until Sunday, the 11th, that he was liberated, his criès for help having been heard by two negroes who were hunting about among the ruins.

The state of the city immediately after the catastrophe can be well conceived from the numerous photographs taken at the time, and from the descriptions of those who were the first to enter the mangled streets. In the place of the busy, pleasure-loving town was a silent desert of stones and dust. Tier above tier the ruins mounted up to the scorched hills. The land around had been swept bare of everything that was green, for the whole mountain side—once as bright as a robe of many colours—had been shrivelled to one desolate tint of cinder-grey. The streets were blocked up with stones and stucco, burnt timbers, scattered tiles, fragments of iron railings, tree trunks turned to coal, and dead charred bodies lying, for the most part, face downwards. Over all was a soft veil of volcanic dust.

The cobble-stoned quay had been swept clean by the tide.

[1] Heilprin, *loc. cit.* page 117.

Those who first landed there found only a bare skull and a bundle of white ribs lying by the side of a ship's steel hawser in its ring. One writer, who came to St. Pierre towards the end of May, expresses the state of ruin by saying, "We seemed to be wandering through a city that had been blown from the mouth of a cannon, and not one that had been destroyed by any force of nature." [1] All this desolation, be it remembered, was the work of a few minutes.

Many buildings left erect after the visitation of May 8 were demolished by a second eruption of Mont Pelé, which took place on May 20 at 5.15 A.M. This second outbreak was even more violent than the first. It happily involved no loss of life, but it completed the wreck of the city, leaving it as it is found to this day.

[1] Heilprin, page 25.

XXIX.

THE LAST NIGHT IN ST. PIERRE.

WHEN visiting St. Pierre I found among the ruins of a small house on the seaward side of Rue Victor Hugo a very homely object, buried under much dust and miscellaneous debris—a bedroom candlestick. It was of enamelled iron, white, and lacking in all pretension.

One may imagine (and there is none living to gainsay the conceit) that it belonged to some *fille de couleur*, some 'ti Marie whose madras and shoulder scarf once helped to make bright the streets of St. Pierre. It may be supposed that the candle was lit early on the night of May 7, for it would be dark by seven, and the electric light upon which the town depended had failed.

Marie—it would be safe to guess—has lost her buoyant gaiety. There is something solemn and portentous in the air. She opens the casement and looks out into the street. All the laughter and sparkle seem to have left the debonair city. It is strangely silent. To-morrow is a holiday, the fête of the Ascension, and the Grande Rue should be thronged at this time of the evening. The whole roadway is covered deep in dust. A light streaming from an open doorway shows that it has the colour of ashes. The carriages that pass by move without noise. The sound of the horses' feet is as if they trod upon turf. An old country waggon crawls along with a cheerful creaking of its unsteady wheels, a noise that breaks pleasantly upon the silence. Many of the chief shops have for days been closed to customers, as is announced in *Les Colonies*, the daily paper of St. Pierre. There are lights in the *cabarets*, but the men who sit there are very quiet, the sound of their feet on

THE QUAY, ST. PIERRE, MARTINIQUE.

the ash-covered floor is harsh, and the rings of beer left by their mugs on the white tables are turned into rings of mud.

Suddenly there comes a hideous rumbling sound that makes a score of people rush out into the road. The plates in the kitchen rattle, and as 'ti Marie looks back into her room she sees that the china image of the Virgin is rocking on its shelf. A puff of hot suffocating wind blows down the narrow way. It brings with it a smell of sulphur so pungent that the girl holds her handkerchief to her mouth. It sweeps the ashes from the roofs and awnings in gusts, so that men passing by turn up coat collars while women draw their scarves over their heads.

Ashes still are falling; some are large enough to make a patter on the balcony roofs. The dust covers everything, the girl's arms and hair, her neck, the sill upon which she leans. The candle, powdered with fine ash, splutters and burns feebly. One thing that makes the watcher at the window uneasy is the spectacle of people moving out of the town, on their way to the Fort de France road. They carry with them boxes and bundles. The quiet light in 'ti Marie's room seems to chide them for leaving their homes, and those who know her look up at the window and bid her "bon soir"—a last good night.

The night of May 7 was suffocating and intensely hot. This we know from the diary of a M. Roux who left St. Pierre at 5 P.M. on the 7th and spent the night on a distant hill, from which point he witnessed next morning the destruction of the city.

It may be imagined that Marie slept little and that the candle was kept burning all night. Early in the evening she would have heard a steamer leaving the harbour, would have noticed the sound of the bell on the bridge, the shouts of the men and the rattle of the anchor chain coming in through the hawse pipe. This was the Italian ship *Orsolina*. The captain knew Naples, "knew what Vesuvius was, but felt that La Pelée was much that Vesuvius was not."[1] So, although he had only half his cargo on board and although the agents swore, protested, stamped and

[1] Heilprin.

threatened, he hauled up his anchor and, with a sigh of relief, sought his way into the open sea.

At daybreak next morning any who were awake would have heard a steamer come in, whistle cheerfully and drop her anchor, with the noisy satisfaction of having reached her port with "all well." This was a steamer of the Quebec line, the *Roraima*. In less than two hours she was charred and gutted and burnt to the water's edge.

Possibly during this fevered, stifling night 'ti Marie may have consoled herself by reading the local newspaper published that morning.[1] It contained much information about volcanoes that the reader may have skipped, but she would have gained great comfort and assurance from this editorial utterance: "La Montagne Pelée n'offre pas plus de danger pour les habitants de St.-Pierre que le Vésuve pour ceux de Naples." The editor, moreover, in discussing the exodus from the city, remarks with some disdain: "Nous avouons ne rien comprendre à cette panique. Où peut-on être mieux qu'à St.-Pierre?" Where could one be better than at St. Pierre!

Possibly 'ti Marie fell asleep towards the morning, after the candle had long burned down. She would be awakened at eight by a sound as of the bursting of a mine. The outer sun-shutter that closed the window would, untouched, release itself from its fastenings and swing open. A savage blast of flame would dart in, and in a second the soft, palpitating body of the little maid would be a curled up thing of damp ash.

One other relic of the last days of St. Pierre in my possession is a silver watch. I obtained it from a man at Fort de France who, when visiting the ruins, had found it under the corpse of a man in one of the side streets. The outer case of the watch has been turned to a leaden black colour. The silver has been so melted by the heat that the pattern engraved upon the back is smeared out as if with a red-hot thumb. The glass is, of course, cracked and is partly fused to the white enamel of the face, yet it is still possible to read the time—8.22.

[1] A reproduction of *Les Colonies* for May 7 is given in Heilprin's book, page 68.

The exact moment of the destruction of the city was 7.52 A.M., as shown by the clock left standing over the military hospital. The awful suddenness with which the blow fell can best be judged from the following incident. At a moment corresponding to the above time a message came over the wire from St. Pierre to Fort de France. It consisted of one single word "Allez"—a remarkable utterance in view of what happened. It was the last word ever spoken by the city. It is said to have embodied the request that a message then in transit to St. Pierre should be completed. Almost by the time that the clipped sentence reached Fort de France the office, the instrument, the operator, the very wires were a mass of cinders.

The owner of the watch may have been preparing to start for the cathedral, dressed in his best, when the heavens were rent by the crack of doom. Rushing into the street, he would have been met by a scud of furnace-hot dust, by a red blizzard of glowing ash. He would be struck down by the sulphurous hurricane, and hurled along the road together with fragments of falling houses, flying tiles and stones, window shutters and balcony railings. His clothes would be stripped from his back as if they were made of dust, and he would lie among the cinders bare, a charred image of a man.

If the watch were sentient it would have felt the death-discerning flutter of the heart and then the stopping of its beat. Protected by the smouldering body, the watch must have ticked against the now impassive ribs for some thirty minutes, until the heat had reached its own heart and stopped that too.

XXX.

THE SHADOW OF THE MOUNTAIN.

It was in February 1907—just four years and nine months after the great disaster—that I visited St. Pierre.

We steamed into the roadstead from Fort de France, and anchored as near the shore as the sunken shipping would allow. On entering the wide bay on which the city stood, the only impression is one of utter desolation. Dominating the whole district is the awful mountain La Pelée. It is well named "The Bald," for, with the exception of the verdure on its southern side, it is, as seen from the sea, nothing more than a gigantic cinder heap. The height of Mont Pelé is 4428 feet.[1] It is a volcano of immense girth, since it occupies practically the northern end of the island. Enormous tentacles, in the form of harsh ridges, reach down to the Atlantic on the one side, and to the Caribbean Sea on the other.

St. Pierre is at the very foot of the volcano, lying nearer to it by a mile than Pompeii did to Vesuvius. The rim of the crater is hidden in a cloud of smoke and mist. The slopes of the mountain are a ghastly fawn colour, streaked with grey and sinister tints of brown. They are slopes of mud relieved only by drifts of ash and hurled out rocks. When the sun is setting, the long shadows cast by the lower peaks across the cinder wastes are like the shadows that fall from the craters in the moon. Here and there are valleys of lilac or indigo blue, but their walls are burnt and bare so that they are mere echoing chines, terrible in their emptiness and loneliness. Torrents of rain have gouged gutters down the glissade of mud, while, at certain points, crests of

[1] The height of Vesuvius is 3948 feet, of Etna 9652 feet.

rock and rib-like buttresses stand out, as if the skeleton of the mountain were protruding through its shrunken flanks.

On the quarter nearest to the sea and to the town is an immense mud torrent, which has been suddenly struck motionless and solid. On the steeper heights it takes the form of a glacier of mud, carrying along a doleful moraine of impacted stones. Below it opens out like a fan into a full flood, contorted by intertwining streams, with here a motionless eddy, and there a whirlpool changed into a cone-shaped pit. In the impassive depths of this Slough of Despond lie the bones of one hundred and fifty men and women. One who saw the hideous mountain just after the cataclysm of May describes it well when he writes, " Mont Pelé is bleeding with black mud." [1]

Along the whole stretch of the bay there is not a living figure to be seen, not one sign of human life, not even a poor hut, nor grazing cattle. Over the site of the town, as seen from afar, there appears to lie a shadow that no sun can disperse—the shadow of the mountain. Along the beach, where the town stood, there is merely a stain in the green, a coarse smudge left by the hand that swept the city out of existence.

The quay of cobble stones upon which one lands would seem to be but little altered, save for the heaps of cinder dust and the growth of weeds. There are still the bollards and iron rings for mooring ships as well as the little landing-places. Along the whole sea front is a line of pale ruins, roofless houses of stone with empty doors and windows, and a look of age so extreme that they may have been desolate a century or more.

A generous growth of jungle has spread over the place in these last five years. Rank bushes and even small trees make quite a thicket along some of the less-traversed ways. A considerable part of the Rue Victor Hugo has been cleared of debris, leaving the trim road, the side paths and the rain gulleys precisely as they were on the morning of May 8. The houses are mere shells filled with tumbled stones, charred timbers, and dust. Looked down upon from a height the main street appears to run between two

[1] Heilprin.

rows of stone sheep pens. Over some of the houses luxuriant creepers have spread, while long grass, ferns and forest flowers have filled up many a court and modest lane. It is easy to see that in a few more years the poor dead town, with all its hideous scars and horrors of deformity, will be hidden beneath a kindly covering of leaves.

The walls of the cathedral are standing, and suffice to show that it was a building of some stateliness. The wide nave is blocked with a heap of masonry and a clump of bushes. The stone stairs that led up to the higher levels of the town now lead to nothingness. The forlornness of the place is beyond description. Here the railings of a balcony will still be hanging to a wall, although the windows that opened on to it are gone. Here are the long iron hinges of a door still in place, with the lock holding to its socket as it did when the key was last turned by a living hand, but all the woodwork has crumbled into dust.

The idlest grubbing among the ruins reveals many relics of the life of the place. Thus I came across numerous bones, bleached as white as the bones in a museum. In the centre of one house was an iron bedstead with the metal springs of its mattress. In another place there had evidently been an ironmonger's shop, for a disturbance of the dust brought to light a number of fish-hooks, a flat-iron, some padlocks, and many metal spoons. In one spot there would have been a draper's store, because under the stones I came upon an orderly bundle of black neck-ties, such as the provincial Frenchman loves to wear in a flowing bow on Sundays. They were intact, and seem to have suffered only from the damp. The curious manner in which some fragile things escape destruction has been noticed by all who have visited the ruins. Heilprin found packets of starch quite uninjured, as well as bundles of clay pipes and corked bottles with their contents unimpaired. Most of the glass found has been fused into strange shapes. I have a small drinking tumbler, the foot of which is unaltered, but the rim has been melted as if the cup were of wax.

Two things above all will impress any one who likes to recall the city as it was—the lack of all colour, the absence of all sound.

THE MAIN STREET, ST. PIERRE, MARTINIQUE.

It was on a Sunday evening, at the time of the setting of the sun, that our ship steamed away from this Bay of Desolation. Five years ago it would have been the gayest hour of the day. Under the shadow of the tamarind trees along the Place Bertin would be moving dots of scarlet and white, of primrose and blue, the dresses of smiling women who had come to the water's edge to see the steamer go away. The vesper bell would be ringing from the cathedral tower, while from the paths that zigzagged down the hill may have been borne the far-off laughter of folk returning to their homes. In its place was this silent Massacre Ghat, this city of ghosts, this heap of calcined bones.

The town faces westwards, so as we steamed away the level rays of the sinking sun fell upon the poor dead walls, poured through the sightless windows, and threw long shadows of fantastic shape across the dumb white street. Just for a moment before the sun vanished a roseate hue spread over the gaunt city. Those who viewed it shuddered as would they who saw a flush of life creeping over a skull. It seemed as if—ere the night fell—the warm tint of life had come back to the life-loving town, and as if, across its withered face, there passed for a moment the happy blush of things remembered.

XXXI.

DOMINICA.

THE next stage of the journey is to Dominica, some thirty miles to the north. The steamer passes by the foot of Mont Pelé close to the broken-off cliffs of mud piled up by the last eruption. Further on is the ancient village of Au Prêcheur, upon whose small life has fallen the silence of the mountain's shadow. The little place has been buried in a torrent of volcanic mud, so that only the tower of the stone church stands up above the drift.

Beyond Au Prêcheur, at a place called Aux Abymes, the cliffs become very lofty, sheer and black. They rise straight from the depths, for close to them will be found some thirty fathoms of water. It was under the shadow of these cliffs that the Confederate cruiser *Alabama* hid herself "as a fish hides in the shadow of a rock," and so escaped from her pursuer the *Iroquois*.

The *Alabama* had long been blockaded in the harbour of St. Pierre by the Northern man-of-war. The *Iroquois* could see her, but was unable to touch her so long as she remained in French waters. The *Alabama* resolved at last to make a run for it. One dark night, with all her lights masked, she crept out of St. Pierre and steered for the south. Unfortunately there were other Yankee ships in the harbour, and one of these shot a rocket southwards as a signal to the *Iroquois* that their quarry had escaped and had gone in that direction. The *Iroquois* gave chase. The *Alabama* kept close to the shore as far as Carbet, a thing invisible. Here she doubled like a hare, and making north, passed by St. Pierre again. The Yankee ship in the harbour—with what sporting men would consider the basest meanness—fired a rocket, this time northwards. The *Iroquois* turned and followed with all speed.

The hunted ship now crawled in close to the dark cliffs at Aux Abymes, and here she crouched in a disquieted suspense. The men crept about the deck on tiptoe and talked only in whispers. There was no sound but the splash of the sea against the cliff wall and the thud of the pursuing man-of-war. The *Iroquois* drew nearer and nearer. The men on the *Alabama*, motionless as statues and almost fearing to breathe, watched her with the interest of despair. She came abreast of them. "Was she slackening speed?" "No." She blundered by, tearing away fiercely to the north. The *Alabama* waited until she was out of hearing and then escaped by the Dominica Channel, her crew chuckling with laughter.

If Francis Drake had been on board the *Alabama* he would have looked in at St. Pierre before he left and sunk the mean ship with the rockets.

They say, they who know the islands, that Dominica is the most beautiful of all the Lesser Antilles, and in that they say well. As seen in the early morning it may be described in words that Lafcadio Hearn applies to another island: "A beautiful, fantastic shape floats to us through the morning light; first cloudy gold like the horizon, then pearly gray, then varying blue, with growing green lights; Dominica."[1]

Like the neighbouring Antilles it is very mountainous, presenting on every side to the sea a front bold and magnificent. Its loftiest peak, the Morne Diablotin, reaches to the height of nearly 5000 feet. Its valleys are valleys of enchantment, made musical by the sound of a hundred streams. A vast forest covers it from crown to foot, for it is green to the very water's edge, while its topmost trees mount up into the clouds.

It is a worshipful place; "a tabernacle for the sun"; a shrine of a thousand spires, rising tier above tier, in one exquisite fabric of green, purple and grey. The sea that lies at its feet is blue beyond comparison, a deep gentian blue. The same tint colours the haze that fills the inland gorges, as if the mist were but the blue sea vapourised.

[1] *Two Years in the French West Indies*, page 92.

Columbus made Dominica his landfall in the second voyage. Leaving Cadiz on September 25, 1493, and touching only at the Canaries on the way, he reached Dominica on November 3 of that year. His men were becoming alarmed at being so long out of sight of land, so, on November 2, Columbus recklessly assured them that they would see land on the morrow, and as night fell ordered sail to be shortened. When the next morning dawned they were off the most beautiful island they had ever seen. It was Sunday, and so the spot came to be named Dominica.

Columbus did not land, but having cruised round the coast, proceeded to an island lying north-east. Here he anchored and, going ashore with much solemnity, took possession of such lands as were in view. The island thus honoured was uninhabited. He named it Marie Galante, after the ship in which he was sailing, and such is its name to this day.

Dominica, beautiful as it is, did not attract the early emigrant. It was, as a matter of fact, held by Caribs of exceptional fierceness, who would have no dealings with visitors except to eat them. Davies, writing in 1666, has no more to say of Dominica but that it was a wilderness "inhabited by hordes of hostile savages, who dwell among horrid and unnatural scenery, infested by an infinite number of reptiles of a dreadful bulk and length."

The Caribs had a particular objection to armed men. When that jovial priest and *bon vivant*, Père Labat, visited the island at the close of the seventeenth century he found the natives quite agreeable and placid. He tried to make Christians of them, and found that "they were willing to be baptised as often as he liked for a glass of brandy."[1]

Every attempt, however, to make a regular settlement in the island failed; so in 1748, as the place was of no use to either England or France, it was, with noble self-denial on both sides, declared to be neutral and handed over to its rightful owners, the Caribs. The wild man of Dominica had up to this time defied the European with success for just 255 years. A little later the French, with much patience and courage, colonised the uneasy

[1] Froude, *The English in the West Indies*.

country ; whereupon, of course, the British wanted it and seized it. The French retook it, and in this way Dominica became another pawn on the great West Indian chess-board.

Dominica was a favourite place of call for the distressed sea rover of early days. Both Hawkins and Drake found the island a convenient spot for "refreshing." Here also rested in 1597 George, Earl of Cumberland, M.A. of Cambridge and pirate. He was on his way to San Juan, where he accomplished great deeds.

Roseau, the chief town of Dominica, is a makeshift and untidy place, full, however, of ancient and most picturesque wooden houses, with shingle roofs, quaint porches and haphazard balconies. It shows the signs of progress and prosperity, for Dominica does a busy trade in both limes and cacao. Owing in great measure to the skilful administration of Dr. H. A. Nicholls, C.M.G., who has devoted his life to the island, the colony is very healthy, having the remarkably low death rate of sixteen per thousand. There has been no case of yellow fever in Dominica for over seventy years, and malaria is being slowly eliminated. The mean temperature for the year is 79·9°, while the annual rainfall at Roseau is about 75 inches.

There are two admirable features in the town which the visitor will at once appreciate : an excellent Free Library, with a good collection of books on the West Indies ; and the Botanic Gardens, which—thanks to the genius of Mr. Jones, the curator—are without a rival in this part of the world. Not only is the collection of tropical plants remarkable but every exhibit is clearly labelled, so that what is seen can be "understanded of the people." The Imperial Department of Agriculture has here a school for the sons of peasant proprietors and others, where instruction is given in the principles and practice of the craft.

Roseau possesses a Roman Catholic cathedral of some pretension, but very French, and an English church of less ambition, but very English. There are many memorials on the walls of the latter, most of them so diffuse and eulogistic as to recall the fact that a statement cut upon stone is not an affidavit on oath. A truculent-looking fort, black with age, stands close to the water's

edge, a relic of the time when the British and French played at Dominica a game very like that known to boys as "King of the Castle."

The inhabitants—negroes and mulattoes—make the dull streets, the duller quayside and the market-place bright by their gaudy costumes, and by the brilliant turbans and scarves with which the women deck their heads.

Behind the town is a steep green hill, the Morne Bruce, with still upon its summit the signs of a long military occupation. From the far margin of the hill is a view of the Roseau valley as it winds inland. There are few who will not allow that this is the most enchanting prospect in the whole of the West Indian islands, and that the vale of the Roseau River is one of the most beautiful in the tropics. The valley is narrow and its walls are steep, walls of grey cliff and tree-covered slope. Over the cliffs have fallen a cascade of green, festoons of creepers, swinging ropes. At the foot of the rock lie piled-up masses of jungle, slopes of leaves, ledges of emerald. Through the tangle tears the roaring stream, showing here and there, among the palms, the tree ferns and the tufts of bamboo, a flash of silver.

There is no tint of green that this valley does not parade, from the green of blue seas to the green of malachite. There is no magic of sunlight and deep shade, no trickery of the waving wind, no illusion of the shifting mist, that it does not employ to enhance its fascination. Far off it ends mysteriously among the great hills, turning away along a defile into the secret recesses of the island.

Some two days' journey from the coast is the Boiling Lake discovered by Dr. Nicholls in 1875. The following is his description of it. "The Boiling Lake fills a small crateriform depression on the eastern slope of the Grand Soufrière Mountains. Sometimes the basin is empty, and then in the centre is seen the circular opening of a geyser. In times of activity boiling muddy water, heavily charged with sulphurous gases, is thrown up to a considerable height, until the accumulation in the basin forms the so-called Boiling Lake, and even then the position of the central orifice may be made out by the gyrating high mound of water

ROSEAU VALLEY, DOMINICA.

caused by the ejective forces below."[1] Photographs of this strange pool show it to be singularly dismal, desolate and unlovely.

That it may be the haunt of the diablotin, or little devil (the bird who gives a name to the highest peak in Dominica), is possible, as that fowl has peculiar and doleful habits. The diablotin is said by Froude to be "a great bird, black as charcoal, half raven and half parrot." Others state that it spends its days in craters and its nights by the melancholy sea searching for fish. If this be true it is to be conceived that the unpleasant bird would find in the dead, sulphur-blasted, and boulder-strewn shores of the Boiling Lake all the charms of home.

[1] *Dominica*, by Dr. H. A. Nicholls, C.M.G., Antigua.

XXXII.

VICTORINE AND HER FOREFATHERS.

A SPECIAL interest attaches to Dominica in that it is — as Dr. Nicholls says—"the only island where pure-blooded descendants of the original inhabitants of the Antilles are to be found." There is in a remote spot on the north-east coast of the island a Carib Reservation provided by the Government. Here these ancient people live in peace and contentment. Although their numbers are diminishing, they can still muster about three hundred. "They pay no taxes, but are required to keep open the main road through the Reserve, and their chief receives a small stipend from the Government. They are now quiet, peaceful, and well mannered. . . . They have lost all trace of their double language (for the men used to speak one language while the women spoke another), and occupy their days by fishing, making their celebrated waterproof baskets, and cultivating small plots of West Indian fruits and vegetables."[1]

It would appear that the earliest-known inhabitants of the West Indian island were peoples of two types, the Arawaks and the Caribs. They both came from the South American mainland, the Arawaks from Northern Brazil, the Caribs from parts further south. Both are described as races of the Mongolic type, with yellow to olive-brown skin, long, lank, black hair, a broad skull, almond-shaped black eyes, slightly oblique, and bodies of moderate stature. The Arawaks were no doubt the earlier of the two to reach the islands, were savages of a low type, indolent, gentle and unprogressive. The Caribs, who gradually displaced these docile folk, were of greater average height, were fierce, warlike and

[1] *Dominica*, by Dr. H. A. Nicholls, C.M.G., Antigua.

intelligent, and frankly addicted to cannibalism. They could claim to be a race of fine people. Drake when he visited Dominica describes them as "very personable and handsome strong men."

At the time of the discovery of the New World by Columbus the Greater Antilles and the Bahamas were inhabited by Arawaks, the Lesser Antilles by Caribs. It was a day of lamentation for the islander when he met with the enlightened white man, who came from the unknown East bringing with him the "blessings of civilisation."

The place of meeting of these two was at an island called by Columbus San Salvador, but now known as Watling's Island. It received its latter name from a sin-hardened old pirate, John Watling, who was shot in 1681 while attempting to plunder a city. It is a small island, some twelve miles in length, belonging to Great Britain, occupied mainly by salt-water lagoons and low wooded hills; it yet manages to support a population of 600 people, and to merit a reputation for breeding excellent sheep and cattle. Watling's Island is the first land sighted by the mail steamer in her homeward journey from New York to the West Indies. It should therefore be familiar to many. If the ship passes in the night there is still the flash from the lighthouse to show where the island lies.

It was an ever-memorable morning, the morning of October 12, 1492, a day portentous and terrible. The naked savage of San Salvador, when he gazed from the sea-commanding hills, must have wondered where the great water that spread eastward came to an end. The West he knew: there were familiar islands, and that wide continent which figured in the traditions of his tribe. As to the East, the white beach at his feet marked the extremest limit of the known world. From behind the eastern sea rose at dawn the sun and at night the stars, while from out of the same mystic heaven blew the abiding wind; but nothing that had life had ever emerged from over the unchanging ocean rim. No canoe that had passed beyond that margin had ever returned to the land again.

Now, on this October morning, there came from out of the unknown three fearsome things that moved upon the sea.[1] The islander would behold the faint image of a towering ship made ghostly by the uncertain haze, and so colossal that its masts reached to the clouds. As the dawn broke he would see the foam about the sullen bows, the bellying sails, the castle on the fore, the tower on the poop. Every wondrous rope and spar would be cut clear against the tender light; the rocking yards would stretch across the clearing sky; the figures of men and the gleam of arms would be seen along the rail. It was not for him to know that the banner at the mizzen was the standard of Castile, and that the great cross painted on the mainsail was the sign of the Redeemer. This ship from out of the unimaginable abyss would seem to the islander to have sailed from the sun. As it came on the sky around it would break into lilac and crimson and gold, light would radiate from it as rays from a planet, and encircled by the many-coloured halo of the dawn, the majestic craft would roll towards the land.

Columbus, clad in armour and wearing a scarlet cloak, landed on the beach with profound solemnity, and in this wise the wild man and his destroyer met. The simple naked folk brought as presents balls of cotton, spears and parrots, and received in exchange scarlet caps, beads, and hawk's bells. The foremost and ever present desire of the adventurer from Castile was that "the Lord in His mercy would direct him to find gold": after that came a yearning to see these poor untutored people "free and converted to the Holy Faith." To see them free; they who were as free as the sea-birds! To strive that they may be "saved from the darkness of their happy innocence, and brought to the light of a religion that had just evolved the Inquisition"![2]

It would have been happy if the bartering had ended with balls of cotton and hawk's bells; but it soon became a traffic in which the only island goods that were marketable were human lives.

[1] The three vessels of Columbus were the *Santa Maria*, 100 tons, the *Pinta*, 50 tons, and the *Nina*, 40 tons.

[2] *Christopher Columbus*, by Filson Young, vol. i. page 107: London, 1906.

The first settlement of the Castilians was on Haiti. The natives here—estimated at about a million in number—were the childlike, unresisting Arawaks. They were soon wiped off the earth. They were made to work as slaves in the mines until they died of starvation and excessive toil. They were massacred wholesale with appropriate treachery, were hunted down as if they were rabbits, were decimated by imported diseases, or beaten to death for not attending Mass. The gentle Queen Isabel did what lay in her power to protect them. Slavery was by her forbidden, but the prohibition was easily evaded by ingenious forms of indentured labour. It was urged, too, that it was good for the natives to work in mines, as idleness was demoralising. The poor Indians could not look after themselves, the slave-driver said, and moreover if they remained in their villages "it was impossible to instruct them in the principles of Christianity." Even supposing that they were enslaved, murdered, or worked to death, at least in every instance they were baptised.

When Haiti became depopulated the pious Spaniards extended the field of their missionary labours to the Lesser Antilles; but in these islands the cause was not blessed, for they had to deal with the warlike Carib who was more than a match for them. Thus it was that these pioneers of civilisation turned their attention to the Bahamas. Here they kidnapped the docile islanders without having to murder very many of them, baptised the survivors and sent them to the mines to rot.

It was never forgotten that the object of these man-hunting forays was to enable the Arawak to be instructed in the Holy Faith. "It would be necessary," explained the Governor of Haiti, "that they should be transported to Hispaniola (Haiti); as missionaries could not be spared to every place and there was no other way in which this abandoned people could be converted."[1] It was by this energetic method of extending the blessings of religion to the abandoned natives of the Bahamas that those islands became as bare of human life as a desert.

[1] *History of the Buccaneers*, by Captain James Burney, R.N. : London, 1891.

The zeal with which the ministers of God from Spain kept the recently baptised savage from heresy and insured his attendance at Mass attracted the notice of such explorers as came to the New World. Samuel Champlain, for example, made a voyage into these waters between the years 1599 and 1602.[1] He gives, in the book he wrote, a picture of seven Indians burning in one fire, while a couple of elaborately dressed Spaniards stand by to watch them roasting with unaffected boredom. The abandoned natives were probably being burned alive on account of inaccurate views as to the Real Presence, but as they were ignorant of the Spanish tongue the offence was small.

In another engraving Champlain shows how the savage, after he had been brought under religious influences, was induced to attend the service of his church. At the door of a house of prayer stands a priest with a book in his hand. The fingers of the other hand are raised as if he were about to pronounce a blessing. In the forecourt an Indian is being beaten with a club by a very powerful man. The ecchymosed savage is gazing at the priest with curiosity. It is explained that the club, which would fell an ox, is a means of Grace whereby the thoughtless were led to attend to their devotions. It is further explained that each convert who was absent from Mass received at the hands of the athletic missionary thirty to forty blows from the Gospel club in the precincts of the place of worship.

Champlain in his account of the natives remarks that "they are of a very melancholy humour." Those who were irregular in their church attendances and who survived their bruises and broken ribs had certainly reasons for depression.

The Caribs in the smaller islands, although they may have had the good fortune to escape the missionary, fell victims to the man with the musket and the man with a keg of brandy under his arm. They both came to him with lies on their lips and treachery in their hearts. The Carib had to fight for his life and for every foot of his native land. He had to fight in turn the Spaniards, the French, the English and the Dutch. It was the hopeless battle of

[1] Hakluyt Society, 1859.

arrow and spear against powder and ball; the war of the naked savage against the world. The brown man, however, held his own valiantly. In Dominica he defied all comers for some two centuries and a half. He had strength, sagacity and courage, and behind him the generous arms of an impenetrable forest. He might have held his islands longer but for his taste for rum.

During my stay at Dominica I was able, through the kindness of Dr. Nicholls, to make the acquaintance of a pure-blooded Carib from the Reservation. She was a girl of ten, whose name was Victorine. She was a picturesque little maid, with pretty manners and a singularly sweet voice. Her complexion was yellow-brown, her hair long, lank and black. She had the lacquer-black eyes of a Japanese doll, almond-shaped and a little oblique, a fine mouth and lips, slightly prominent cheeks. The type of her face was distinctly Mongolian, without the least suggestion of the negro in its outlines. She was as erect as an arrow and walked as only an Indian can walk. Her dress was of pink stripes, and her head-dress a primrose-coloured turban or madras. (See frontispiece.)

Victorine was brought out to see the steamer. It was her first experience of a large ship. Everything delighted her except the engines. It was about the bath-rooms that she was the most curious, for in a quite imperious manner she signified that it was her pleasure to visit them a second time. She seemed to connect them somehow with religion. She was not as graceful in her mode of eating as in her walking. She was given tea, but declined the use of a saucer as superfluous. Whatever she ate was first dipped in the cup.

Victorine could claim at least an interesting ancestry. Her people roamed the island for centuries before Columbus came. They saw the sailing hither of the first great ship the *Marie Galante*. They watched the landing of Drake and Hawkins when they came for "refreshing," just as now they may gaze at blue-jackets coming ashore from the modern ironclad. Victorine may not be "the daughter of a hundred earls," but among her forefathers might have been that "King of the Cannibal Islands" who is for ever famous in the English nursery song.

She might still have been attracted by a scarlet cap, a string of beads, or a hawk's bell. None of these being at hand, she was offered her choice of certain commonplace articles. With a remarkable precision and with more than mere instinct she selected a purse and two half-crowns, those being the largest of the coins laid out before her. It was impossible not to feel that the most fitting present for this little wild thing, with her brown skin and piercing eyes and her wilder ancestry, would still have been a hawk's bell.

XXXIII.

THE BATTLE OF THE SAINTS PASSAGE.

As the steamer makes her way northwards again there comes into view, between Dominica and Guadaloupe, a blue-water channel. It is called The Saints Passage, not on the surmise that it leads to Heaven, but because athwart it lie Les Isles des Saintes as well as little Marie Galante. Here was fought, between Rodney and De Grasse, the bloody and momentous battle of April 12, 1782. It was an engagement upon which hung the fate of Great Britain in the West Indies, for it was a fight for the mastery of the sea.

The English fleet came from Gros Islet Bay in St. Lucia, the French had sailed ahead of them from Martinique. Off Dominica Rodney, on April 9, caught up with the enemy. They approached one another stealthily, with catlike caution. There was a good deal of manœuvring and shifting of place. Like two wrestlers, with every muscle on the strain, they faced one another, keen in the intent to obtain the best position before they came to the grip. On April 12 Rodney saw his opportunity : he closed in upon the French fleet and the battle to the death began.

It lasted thirteen hours, and no one can say who fought the more gallantly, the French or the British. De Grasse was on board the great *Ville de Paris*, a ship with 104 guns and the finest man-of-war afloat. Rodney's vessel was the *Formidable* with 98 guns. Rodney was at the time a man of sixty-four, who had had his share of buffeting in the world, and was, moreover, ill with the gout. A man harsh and reserved, he kept himself aloof from his officers, having little of that *camaraderie* which distinguishes the followers of the sea. He fought the battle alone, with much grumbling and growling no doubt, but with infinite care and skill.

As to the battle itself it was no mean sight at the end. There were over sixty ships of war engaged, and most of them had had belabouring enough by the time the sun set. On many the flag had been hauled down. Some were being towed away helpless, while not a few were drifting about in silence, mere aimless wrecks. In the blue sky above the Passage of the Saints there hung still a fateful cloud of smoke. The pansy-coloured sea was strewn with spars and tangled gear, with ugly splinters of stout oak and strange things swept from disordered decks. Here it may be was a swimming man and there, behind him, the fin of a shark.

The firing had become feebler and feebler until it had almost ceased. Quiet had fallen upon the outskirts of the fight, but in the centre was some hubbub still. Here was one ship which would not be silenced. Her upper works were shattered from bow to stern, her sails were in rags, her ropes and rigging hung from the spars like dead creepers in a wood, her decks were covered with the wounded and the dying. Yet still, from time to time—and the intervals became painfully longer—a puff of smoke would burst savagely from her battered ports. This was the French flagship, the *Ville de Paris*, the only vessel that had not surrendered. A last broadside was poured into her by the English, and now maimed, reeling, dazed, she made no answer.

In a breathless silence the flag of France came down through the powder smoke, and any who could catch a glimpse of the sea between the hulls of the encircling ships would notice that a small boat was being rowed from the *Ville de Paris* to the *Formidable*. In the boat was Comte de Grasse on his way to surrender his sword to the British admiral.

In the quiet, old-world square of Spanish Town in Jamaica is a memorial to Rodney, and in front of it stand two brass eighteen pounders. They are very daintily decorated, bear the date 1748, and, under a proud coat of arms, the name "Louis Charles de Bourbon, Comte d'Eu, Duc d'Aumale." These were the two most cherished guns from the fighting deck of the *Ville de Paris*, and one may be allowed to think that from their grey-green muzzles was fired, on that day in April, the last defiant charge.

BRIMSTONE HILL, ST. KITTS.

XXXIV.

ST. KITTS.

EVERY reader of "Vanity Fair" will remember that from St. Kitts came Miss Swartz, "the rich, woolly-haired mulatto," who was a parlour boarder at Miss Pinkerton's Select Academy for young ladies on Chiswick Mall. Miss Swartz, by reason of her being an heiress, "paid double," but then she had the priceless advantage of learning the French tongue from no less a person than Becky Sharp. It will be recalled also that Miss Swartz, besides being woolly-headed, was acutely emotional, for it is recorded that when she parted with Miss Amelia Sedley at the Chiswick Academy, her "hysterical yoops were such as no pen can depict, and as the tender heart would fain pass over."

Although St. Kitts still produces woolly-haired young women, it is to be feared that few of them are heiresses, or are in a position to "pay double" at such a seat of learning as Miss Pinkerton's Academy. The island is distinctly prosperous, but the days for the making of large fortunes in sugar have long since gone by.

St. Kitts will impress the visitor as being not only well-to-do but comfortable. Almost every available part of it is cultivated, for fields of sugar-cane climb far up the mountain sides. The island possesses excellent roads; its villages are neat, while there is about them little of that squalor or air of dejection which is conspicuous in neighbouring settlements. After experience of such wild islands as St. Lucia and Dominica, St. Kitts will be welcome, since it is, in a happy measure, free from the untidy tangle of the tropics, from the ever-repeated savage gorge and

tree-bristling precipice. It is welcome to those who, in their journey among the islands, have become surfeited with the "everlasting hills" and the exigency of the restless and importunate jungle.

St. Kitts has much of the garden trimness of England, and something of the homeliness of the mother country. It is possible to drive for miles along a straight, white road, between fields which are not a little like fields of exalted corn, and by green slopes which might be covered by Brobdingnagian turnips. The road skirts the coast so that, ever and again, there opens out such a view of the sea and of long beaches as may be come upon within sound of the English Channel. By the roadside will be a little old stone church—such as the one near Palmetto Point—with a wooden tower, and in the churchyard the crumbling tombs of British settlers who died two centuries ago. Then in a dip among the trees will be a picturesque village of pewter-grey timber houses, with sun shutters and shingle roofs, shaded by palms, and half hidden by bushes of scarlet hibiscus.

The village women—negresses and mulattoes—wear bright-patterned gowns and a turban or madras still more brilliant in hue. It is uncommon in the country, and even in the town, to see the coloured women disfigured by a slatternly imitation of European dress.

The main part of the island (as viewed from the sea) shows one immense central mountain which pervades the whole territory, and sends forth trailing ridges from which spring secondary hills, such as those of Middle Range and the South-East Ridge. The parent mountain is called Mount Misery. It is an extinct volcano, 4300 feet high, sour enough looking to justify its name. It keeps its dead crater hidden from sight, wrapped round by a shawl of clouds. All about the skirts of the hills are easy slopes and plains, cultivated to the last acre.

The general colour of the island is lettuce-green—the green of the sugar-cane. This will be mottled here and there with brown where the sea-island cotton is growing, or will be slashed with streaks of ivy-green where a gully, stuffed with trees, roams down

the mountain side. Above the pleasant belt of lettuce-green are the dark hill summits and the clouds. Below it is the smooth blue of the sea.

Basse Terre, the capital, is, like the rest of the island, clean, orderly and well content. It lies at the foot of a shapely height called Monkey Hill. Most of the houses are of wood, some are of grey stone. There is little that is ancient about the town, except the tombs in the churchyard, because it has suffered much from fire. It is a healthy wind-swept place, with a reputation for salubrity as far back as the time when Francis Drake and his fleet spent a Christmas here "to refresh our sick people, and to cleanse and air our ships."[1] To show that it is alive to what is expected of a chief city it has a public garden—Pall Mall Square—in the centre of which is the necessary insigne of greatness, a fountain.

St. Kitts—or, to give it its proper name, St. Christopher—was never colonised by Spain. The first settlers were English, who landed in 1623 under the guidance of "a man of extraordinary agillity of body and a good witt," one Thomas Warner, Gent. The chief trouble of the newcomers was with the Caribs. In 1625 a poor wreck of a French privateer crept into St. Christopher. D'Esnambuc, the captain of the battered ship, begged the English to give him refuge, and allow him and his crew of thirty men to land. He had been badly disabled in an engagement with a Spanish galleon, and for the moment had had enough of the sea. The English welcomed him as an addition to the force for fighting the Caribs.

Thus it chanced that the island became partly British and partly French. The English settled at Sandy Point, just beyond Brimstone Hill, the men from the privateer at Basse Terre. It is unnecessary to say that this arrangement—like the Box and Cox tenancy—did not make for peace. So long as there were any Caribs to murder the two peoples were quite happy, but when the supply of wild men failed, then poor St. Christopher came to the knowledge that she had no abiding city. The island was some-

[1] Hakluyt Society. Narrative by Thomas Cates.

times French, sometimes English, and in uneasy intervals it was neither or both. The English had the last move in the game, for since 1783 St. Kitts has been a colony of Great Britain.

Probably the most conspicuous feature of the island is Brimstone Hill. The mound with this unpleasant name is some nine miles from Basse Terre by the white coast road of which mention has been made. An ancient church with a solid square tower is passed on the way, called Middle Island Church. Here will be found, in a dilapidated condition, the tomb of Thomas Warner, the founder of the colony. It would appear from the inscription on the stone that he bought an illustrious name "with losse of noble blood," and that having accomplished this purchase he died in March 1648. Brimstone Hill is an isolated precipitous mass of rock, 779 feet high, standing alone near the seashore opposite Mount Misery. It seems as if it had been tipped out of the crater of that mountain, for there are those who say that it would just fit into the cavity of the volcano. It belongs to no ridge nor range, and has the appearance of a wandering hill that has lost its way. Some portion of it is bare cliff, while the major part of the rock is covered with scrub. The hill was easily made a fortified place, and as such it was the centre around which the island fighting raged.

As it at present stands every available portion of the rock is covered with defensive works and military buildings a century old. A steep, winding road leads up to the main gate. Within are steeper ramps and precipitous stairs, endless walls and parapets, roving passages, lines of barracks, gun embrasures by the score, redoubts, bastions, ravelins, sally-ports, stone-roofed magazines, officers' quarters, and a maze of cellar-like chambers. It is indeed a little town on a hill, a town of stone, whose walls have been blackened by years, while upon the whole of the rambling fortress has fallen the ruin of long emptiness and neglect.

It is a purgatorial place to visit, especially on a hot day, and as a penance for those of uneasy conscience there can be nothing more satisfying than a climb to the solid mass of loopholed and battlemented masonry that crowns the summit of the height. Here

at least is the fort impregnable, the all-defying rock stronghold. To reach to even the drawbridge is to pass through more obstacles than ever beset Christian in the "Pilgrim's Progress." Indeed the fortress on the peak might be that Doubting Castle whose owner was Giant Despair and whose châtelaine was Madam Diffidence. The massive door is just such an one as Mr. Greatheart knocked at, and at which he parleyed with the porter.

I am afraid that this heavily armoured giant of a fort—in spite of all its bluster—must rank with the parlour warrior, for it has seen practically nothing of fighting. It was built in 1793 (as the date over the gate testifies), but by that time St. Kitts had passed through its many troubles and had entered upon the present long spell of comparative peace.

The view from the summit of the works is very fine. At one's feet are the Caribbean coast of St. Christopher and the village of Sandy Point, where was once the capital of the English half of the island. A little way to the north are two sleek volcanic cones rising out of the sea. These are the strange and curious Dutch islands, Saba and St. Eustatius.

High up on Brimstone Hill, on a ledge of the bare cliff, is the graveyard, where will be found the only chronicles of the fortress that are preserved among the ruins. From the tombstones it will be seen that the 9th Regiment was here in 1790, the 25th Regiment in 1808, and the King's Own Borderers in 1811. It will appear also that on the hill lived women and children, for many are buried here. Death came quickly to some, as is shown by a monument to two boys aged respectively nine years and two years, the sons of a major of the 25th Regiment, who died within a few days of each other.

Not the least interesting stone in the small cemetery bears the following curious inscription:

MEMORIAL SACRUM OF JOHN BOREHAM
LATE SOLDIER MY 9TH REGIMT OF FOOT
DEC 1790 AGED 38
HE LEFT HIS WIFE ISABEL AND 4 CHILDREN
SHE ERECD THIS STONE AS HER LAST DUTY

Should the ghost of the soldier's wife ever return to the island, and to this little niche in the cliff where she fulfilled her Last Duty, she will find that, although the fort is abandoned and the barracks of the 9th Regiment are roofless and silent, the plot of ground is still carefully tended, the "Memorial Sacrum" is still intact, while by its side, as if it were Isabel's spirit, is an English rose in bloom.

BRIMSTONE HILL, ST. KITTS.

XXXV.

ST. KITTS IN ALL ITS GLORY.

CERTAIN letters written from St. Kitts by Christopher Jeaffreson between the years 1676 and 1686 serve to give a graphic picture of the island in its heyday.[1] Christopher was born in England in 1650. His father, a Suffolk gentleman, was a friend and neighbour of that "man of extraordinary agillity of body" Thomas Warner, who founded the West Indian colony. In this enterprise the agile Warner was joined by Christopher's father, who ultimately built a large house in St. Kitts and established a plantation there.

Thomas Warner was a remarkable man, and his wife, in the matter of courage and devotion, was certainly no ordinary woman. She and her boy of thirteen left a comfortable home in East Anglia to join the pioneer party who were bent upon establishing a colony in the unknown West Indies. When the Warner family sailed from out of the English Channel into the open sea they had no idea where they were destined to land. The spirit of adventure must have been strong upon them, for a voyage of 4000 miles in such a sailing ship as dared the seas in 1623 would have made faint the hearts of most.

Christopher Jeaffreson on his father's death inherited the property in St. Kitts, and paid his first visit to the island in 1676, when he was twenty-six years old and, it may be added, already a widower. He left Billingsgate on February 16, 1676, in the *Jacob and Mary*, a vessel of 150 tons, carrying sixteen guns. He took with him four servants and reached St. Kitts on May 24,

[1] *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century*. London, 1878.

with no more than moderate adventures. His journey home, some ten years later, was more expeditious for it occupied only nine weeks. It was so tedious a voyage, however, that his joy was excessive when, after sixty-three days on the high seas, they came at last to an anchor in "Westcoat Bay a few miles above Margett." In his account of the wearisome home-coming he only regrets that they "were a little too lavish of their liquors at first."

It appears from Christopher's letters that trade in the island was very brisk. There was no actual handling of money. Everything was paid for in sugar, indigo, or tobacco. Servants' wages were paid in sugar. A skilled artisan, after four years of free service, received 4000 lbs. of sugar per annum. This curious salary he exchanged for goods sent out from England. He must have found it difficult to save money in the island, for 4000 lbs. of sugar are not to be kept in a money-box, while the income of a few years would fill even a roomy cabin. Slaves were bought and sold in sugar. The purchaser of an estate could pay for it either in sugar, indigo or tobacco according to choice. Shopping, if conducted on the usual lines, must have been not only cumbersome but bared of much of its charm. For example, the wife of the Captain-General set her heart, writes Jeaffreson, upon a piece of Smyrna carpet which is described as being both "large and fine." The price of it was 1700 lbs. of sugar. The lady obtained the carpet, but how the sugar was weighed out and who handed it over the counter is not stated.

If there was a tavern in the town, and if refreshments were to be paid for in cash, the winebibber must have taken a cartload of sugar about with him, together with a shovel and a pair of scales. Even if he trundled a wheelbarrow full of the commodity down to the inn, it may not have met his wants on a thirsty day, and in any case he would, when tipsy, have more than the usual difficulty in counting his change. As collections in church must needs be made in something less messy than sugar, or less apt to stain the fingers than indigo, it would be left to the worshipper, it may be supposed, to place tobacco leaves in the plate as the only available currency.

St. Kitts, even in the younger Jeaffreson's time, was exceedingly fashionable. The ladies were as modish and as elegant in their dress as were the belles of Lincoln's Inn Fields or Soho. The gentlemen, for their part, were equally exquisite and as devoted to point-lace and gilt sword bands as were the gallants in the Mall or Spring Gardens. Elaborate entertainments were in vogue, especially fine dinners, where the guests were waited upon by a crowd of negro servants in serge liveries, and where there was much drinking of madeira. Indeed Mr. Jeaffreson in a business letter remarks that the best "commoditie" in the island was "Madera wine."

Close to St. Kitts is the island of Nevis. The two are so near together that the channel, as it sweeps between Windy Hill and Scotch Bonnet Head, is barely two miles in width. Nevis was destined to eclipse even St. Kitts as a mirror of fashion and as a resort of the most polished society. It was already the seat of what may be termed the court, since it had pleased the Captain-General to make his headquarters there.

Now the lady who bought the Smyrna carpet for 1700 lbs. of sugar had a sister living with her at Government House. Her name was Mistress Frances Russell. She was fifteen years of age, and would receive on her marriage 1500 pounds (not of sugar but of English gold) and four negroes. The age at which most ladies married in West Indian circles was sixteen, and Christopher Jeaffreson, although now thirty-one years of age, gazed amorously upon Miss Frances Russell and determined to make her his.

To go a-courting in a refined community like that of Nevis one must needs be well dressed. So Christopher wrote home at once for "a demi-castor hatt, a good perrewig, a laced cravatt and cuffs, a douzaine yards of ribbons for cravatt and cuffs, a fashionable and handsome sword belt, a payer of silke stockings, and enough silver and gold lace to lace my hatt round." It was an expensive order, but the lovesick widower was a man of affairs, for he remarks, in a later letter, that if the clothes failed to reach him in time "they will not be lost but will come to a good market."

Any agent can buy a demi-castor hat and a periwig, but there are articles of apparel which need a finer taste and a more cultured knowledge of the latest creations of fashion than a shipping agent could be expected to possess. Fortunately Christopher had a sister who lived in the very heart of gayest London. Her name was Madam Brett, and her address "Channell Row, Westminster, near the Mum House." Such a prize as 1500*l.*, together with four negroes and Mistress Frances Russell in person, was not to be gained without cost, so Christopher writes to his worldly sister, "I praye you send me an embroidered and fashionable waist-belt and let everything be modish and creditable, for the better sort in these islands are great gallants."

It is easy to picture the hopeful widower, in his demi-castor hat decked with gold lace, his silk stockings, and the killing waist-belt of Madam Brett's choice, being rowed over to Nevis on the first fine day after the ship came from England. He would have stepped ashore very daintily, and after arranging his periwig, sword, and cuffs on the beach, would have walked with a swagger up to Government House. He might have proposed to the lady kneeling on that very piece of Smyrna carpet which was so "large and fine." As a merchant he is almost sure to have figuratively expressed the weight of his devotion in pounds of sugar; as a passionate suitor he might have damaged the new demi-castor hat by pressing it to his chest.

All which, however, is pure surmise. What we do know for certain is that Mistress Frances Russell, aged fifteen, gave this poor gentleman, who had spent so much on his clothes, "brisque denyall." There was an end of it.

It was a heavy shock, and as Christopher was rowed back in the small boat to St. Kitts he must have gazed ruefully at his new stockings already spotted by the sea, and might have calculated to what amount in indigo he would have to debit himself for this laceration of his feelings. The published letters are silent as to the fate of the decided Miss Frances, but from the same source it is to be gathered that Mr. Jeaffreson never quite recovered from this "suddaine check in his progresse."

St. Kitts as it advanced in prosperity continued to keep ever before it—heedless of hot suns and hurricanes—the resolve to be, at all costs, fashionable. In entertainments, in displays of silver plate and liveries, in dress, in gewgaws, in pure dandyism, the island outdid the old country. On Nevis certain hot springs were discovered, close to Charles Town. Now a hot spring was the one thing needed to make the islands a fitting resort for people of quality, for at the commencement of the eighteenth century the life of a man of taste and breeding could not be supported without a spa.

At Nevis, therefore, a spa was established; and here, to this Tunbridge Wells of the Caribbees, came all the fashionable of the West Indies—the rich merchants with their wives and daughters, the planters, the majors and captains who were invalided or on leave, and the officers of any ship of war that could make an excuse to anchor within sight of Booby Island.

The great people arrived in schooners, with heaps of luggage and a tribe of black servants. From early to late they whirled round in one unending circle of gaiety. There were morning rides to the hills, picnic parties on Mount Pleasant, fishing expeditions to Newcastle Bay, dinners where heated men with loosened cravats proposed the toast of succeeding beauties, and dances which were kept up until sunrise, and indeed until the ponies were brought round to the door again.

This led to many things—to strolls along the sands by moonlight, to many a saunter to the woods to look for fireflies that were never found, to many a whispered invitation to come out on the hill to see the Southern Cross that was forgotten before the hill was reached. Most memorable of all was the full-dress parade after the church service on Sunday; for then "the Clarindas, Belindas, and Elviras of the period swept along, patched and painted, hooped and farthingaled *à outrance* with fly caps, top-knots and commodes, tight-laced bodices, laced aprons, and flounced petticoats, accompanied or followed by the 'pretty fellows,' who wore square-tailed silk and velvet coats of all colours, periwigged and top-hatted, silk-stockinged, and shoed with red-

heeled shoes, their sword-knots trailing almost on the ground, and their canes dangling from the fifth button." [1]

Alas! all this has passed away. The spa is silent and in ruins. [2] The roof of the great building has fallen in, while the balconies and verandahs, which witnessed so much simpering and such play of fans, have vanished to build cart-sheds. Still to be seen are the ball-room, the dining-hall, the overgrown Italian garden with its stucco statuary, and the court where the dowagers and chaperons gossiped and talked scandal.

Most pathetic of all is the mounting stone by the door where the ponies waited; a stone upon which many a satin-covered foot has rested until two strong arms outheld could lift a soft little figure down to the ground.

[1] Newspaper account of the year 1707.
[2] Paton's *Down the Islands*, page 284: London, 1888.

XXXVI.

STRANGE WARES.

THERE were of course many things wanting at St. Kitts in the earlier period of its history. One of the most pressing needs was for malefactors. Malefactors were not only scarce, but they were fetching high prices, in spite of the discount allowed on taking a quantity. English malefactors, it may be explained, were in demand at St. Kitts to fill situations as servants and labourers, and to replenish the ranks of the island army.

Christopher Jeaffreson, he of the demi-castor hat and the wounded heart, made heroic efforts to obtain for his island a befitting consignment of criminals. He petitioned the authorities of Newgate Prison for 300 miscreants, and almost wept for joy when he received the order for the same.

But between getting the order and getting the actual footpads, rebels and shop thieves there is a great gulf fixed. Christopher found that he had to tip the chief gaoler at Newgate in the first place, and to tip him handsomely or not a convict would leave the premises. This avaricious official wanted from 45*s.* to 55*s.* a head for each jail-bird—an expensive matter when a covey of 300 is considered. Worse than that, there were underlings and assistant keepers, low-looking men with scars and black eyes, who grinned horribly at Jeaffreson when he stepped into the prison corridor after having disposed of the chief gaoler. These people, like the minor servants at a Swiss hotel, also wanted to be tipped, and hinted that they could make themselves even more offensive than they looked if they were not delicately subsidised.

Jeaffreson, after much keen negotiation, found it best to regard the consignment as mixed goods, and to take the whole lot, men,

women and children, in one parcel. In this way he was able to obtain a cargo of malefactors, including some very prime specimens, as well as many classed metaphorically as soiled or damaged, for the sum of 45*s.* a head. As prices were ranging at the time this was considered to be a genuine bargain.

Mr. Jeaffreson's difficulties, however, were not yet over. The malefactor trade has its drawbacks. This sum of 45*s.* per head did not include delivery or carriage. The purchaser was informed that the jail-birds would be turned out into the street in front of Newgate at a certain hour, and would be (with the chief warder's compliments) at the purchaser's disposal. This is equivalent to assuring the buyer of a zoological collection that the beasts and reptiles selected will be in the road by the gate of the Gardens at, or about, a definite time.

Mr. Jeaffreson had, in fact, to see his purchases safely conducted from Newgate to Billingsgate, where the convict ship was lying. To this end he must needs engage a guard of armed volunteers. Some of them would be his own friends, others would be club acquaintances, young bloods who were ready for anything, odd soldiers, footmen, watermen, and no doubt mariners from the convict vessel. The procession as it passed down Cheapside must have been one of the most revolting that historic thoroughfare ever saw. On either side would be the motley guard, some of the young bloods not quite sober perhaps, and some of the mariners already handy with their cudgels. In the centre would be the doomed men, handcuffed and chained together.

A fearsome company they would be, haggard men, hatless, barefooted and unwashed. Some would be cursing, some praying, some singing snatches of pot-house songs; while some—the crazy—would rend the air with maniacal laughter. The accompaniment of this hideous processional hymn would be the tramp of the guard and the clatter of the chains on the cobble-stones. There would be boys running by the side, eager to miss nothing; and in the moving crowd not a few of the drunken companions of the gang, who, as they reeled along, would hiccough beery consolation to the voyagers. There would be

slattern wives and weeping mothers too, who would try to press through the guard for one last grip of the manacled hand. The portly merchant would look his sternest as the rabble went by; the little housewife who was about her shopping would draw her skirts aside and creep close to the wall, while from many a window both mistress and maid would gaze into the street with looks of loathing, which would soon change to looks of compassion.

The malefactors, when they reached Billingsgate, were dropped into barges and taken off to the convict ship, to start on a voyage the horrors of which are beyond imagining.

An account of just such a nightmare journey as they had knowledge of has been furnished by "one of the sufferers." He who wrote the log of this Ship of Sighs was one John Coad, a carpenter who took part in Monmouth's rebellion, and was, as a consequence, sentenced by Judge Jeffreys to be transported to the West Indian Islands with 800 others.[1]

Coad, still weak from his wounds, was kicked into the hold of a convict ship at Weymouth on October 17, 1685, near about the very year when Jeaffreson's select party from Newgate were starting westwards. The destination of the rebel carpenter was Jamaica.

From his diary are to be gathered the following particulars of the sea passage. "The master of the ship shut 99 of us under deck in a very small room, where we could not lay ourselves down without lying one upon another. The hatchway being guarded with a continual watch with blunderbusses and hangers, we were not suffered to go above deck for air or easement." They were kept so short of food as to be nearly starved. "Our water also," writes Coad, "was exceeding corrupt and stinking, and also very scarce to be had." This was found to be "a great affliction after they came into the hot weather."

The hold, being without light or air, soon became a fetid

[1] *A Memorandum of the Wonderful Providences of God to a poor unworthy creature during the time of the Duke of Monmouth's Rebellion*, by John Coad, one of the sufferers: London, 1849.

human stye where filth fermented. "By which means the ship was soon infected with grievous and contagious diseases, as the small pox, fever, calenture, and the plague, with frightful botches. Of each of these diseases several died, for we lost of our company,' continues the chronicle, "22 men, and of the sailers and free passengers I know not how many. . . . Others were devoured with lice till they were almost at death's dore."

Those who know something of the stifling, breathless nights of the tropics, can imagine what the hold of this awful craft must have been when all was dark. Above fell the dismal tramp of the watch ; below—as if they were the dregs of the stinking air—lay the survivors of the ninety-nine. Some sang hymns and prayed aloud, says Coad ; others cursed the ship and the sea, the squire of the village who had led them astray, and the fiendish judge who had consigned them to this pit of despair. Whenever there was a lull in the voices there would still be the creaking of the ship, the stertorous breathing of the dying, and the groans of the sick who, as the writer expresses it, "lay tumbling over the rest."

Possibly when sleep had fallen upon many, a man, delirious from small-pox, would spring up, and rush to and fro over the prostrate bodies with fearful shrieks, until he happily struck his head against a beam and fell down senseless.

Well may the follower of Monmouth exclaim, "This was the straitest prison that ever I was in."

XXXVII.

THE LITTLE CAPTAIN OF THE "BOREAS."

NEVIS, the co-partner of St. Kitts, is a noteworthy island. The part it has played in the pursuit of fashion has been already alluded to. Its most remarkable feature is its appearance, which is conspicuous by contrast rather than by any specific lineament. The adjacent islands are irregular, florid in colour, and unrestrained in outline; wild in their forests and jagged peaks, they flaunt an air of profligacy. Nevis, on the other hand, is prim and neat, a dapper island. Its sea margin describes a decorous oval. Its surface is smooth. In its precise centre is a precise hill, cone-shaped and modest, while at either end of the oval is a smaller mound of the same pattern, as if the three were a set of ornaments on a mantelpiece. Thus it comes about that Nevis appears staid, old-maidenly and most genteel, when compared with the brazen-faced islands around—a Quakeress in a company of Spanish dancers.

One of the most interesting memorials of Nevis is represented by a letter written by one young lady to another. It was a private, gossiping letter, intended only for one pair of eyes, yet it has become one of the most famous documents of a period. The writer addresses the note from the house of the President or Governor of Nevis—a Mr. Herbert.

It reads as follows: "We have at last seen the little captain of the *Boreas*, of whom so much has been said. He came up just before dinner, much heated, and was very silent. He declined drinking any wine; but after dinner, when the President, as usual, gave the three following toasts, 'The King,' 'The Queen and Royal Family,' and 'Lord Hood,' this strange man regularly filled

his glass and observed that those were always bumper toasts with him; which having drank, he uniformly passed the bottle and relapsed into his former taciturnity. It was impossible for any of us to make out his real character; there was such a reserve and sternness in his behaviour. Being placed by him, I endeavoured to rouse his attention by showing him all the civilities in my power; but I drew out little more than 'Yes' and 'No.' If you, Fanny, had been here, we think you would have made something of him: for you have been in the habits of attending to these odd sort of people."

This strange, silent mariner, who only said "Yes" and "No," who would neither talk nor drink, but who jumped up promptly and tossed off a bumper at the mention of the words "The King," was Horatio Nelson. The "Fanny" to whom the letter was written was Mrs. Frances Nisbet, the young widow of Dr. Nisbet, late physician of Nevis. In what way she was qualified—as her friend declares—to attend to such odd sort of person as the captain of the *Boreas* we are not informed. Certain it is that she possessed the ability to make "something of him" for she married him.

Nelson appears to have been often at the island, and to have been very friendly with the President. He met Mrs. Nisbet in 1786 at Nevis, and at Nevis the two were wedded on March 11, 1787. Nelson at this period is described as "the meerest boy of a captain," who dressed "in a full laced uniform, an old-fashioned waistcoat with long flaps, and his lank unpowdered hair tied in a stiff Hessian tail of extraordinary length." The marriage took place privately at a house called Montpelier, some way from Charles Town. Of this mansion nothing now remains but a "few trees and a little ruined masonry at the corner of a sugar-cane plantation."[1]

Not far from Montpelier is the Church of St. John, Figtree. The church is a small plain building of stone, of the cemetery chapel type, and with no architectural ornament but a bell gable. In its register is a record of the Nelson marriage in the following words:

[1] Eden Phillpotts, *In Sugar Cane Land*: London, 1893.

"1787. March 11. Horatio Nelson, Esquire, Captain of his Majesty's Ship, the *Boreas*, to Frances Herbert Nisbet, Widow."

This is in no sense a marriage certificate, for the ceremony did not take place in the church ; it is neither signed nor attested, and is merely a note of an occurrence in the parish.

On a slope of the hill immediately behind Charles Town are a few ruined walls and some remains of a terraced garden. These are the sole relics of the mansion in which Alexander Hamilton was born on January 11, 1757. His father was a Scots merchant who had married a French lady. Young Alexander left Nevis at the age of eleven to become for ever famous as "the precocious youth who penned the first draft of the constitution of the United States."

XXXVIII.

THE ENVIRONS OF ST. KITTS.

THERE are some very curious islands round about St. Kitts. On the voyage north from Domenica, for example, the steamer passes close to the great rock Redonda, a smooth, pale fabric of stone rising out of the sea, like the dome of some immense submarine hall, whose span is a mile. It reaches to the height—according to the Admiralty chart—of 1000 feet. It is as bare as a pebble, but has boasted of as many as eighteen inhabitants at one time, the same being engaged in the exporting of phosphate of alumina.

Close to the rock is the very beautiful and healthy island of Montserrat, colonised by the famous Warner, of St. Kitts. It is a peculiarity of this island that the negroes speak with a rich Irish brogue. This phenomenon is explained by the fact that in the seventeenth century the colony was peopled almost entirely by Irish. The pious care with which this attractive dialect has been preserved for over 200 years is illustrated by Ober in the following incident.

An Irishman fresh from Donegal arrives at Montserrat, and leaning over the steamer's rail addresses himself, in the following terms, to a coal-black nigger who has come alongside with provisions.

"Say, Cuffee, phwat's the chance for a lad ashore?"

"Good, yer honor, if ye're not afraid of wurruk. But me name's not Cuffee, an', plase ye, it's Pat Mulvaney."

"Mulvaney? And do yer mean to say ye're Oirish?"

"Oi do."

'The saints dayfind us. An' how long have yer been out here?"

"A matter uv tin year or so."

"Tin year! An' yez black as me hat! Save me sowl, I tuk yez for a naygur."[1]

To the east of the great rock Redonda is Antigua. This charming island is said to be pleasant to live in and to possess scenery very like that of England. It was here that Bartholomew Sharp in *The Most Blessed Trinity* ended his great but most unsanctified voyage (page 55). The history of Antigua is full of interesting incidents. Not the least curious of these is associated with the life and times of Daniel Park, who in the days of good Queen Anne was her Majesty's representative in the island. That there was "something against" this gentleman, and that he failed to win the affection and esteem of the islanders, may be inferred from the following allusion to his arrival at Antigua. This event is spoken of as the occasion when "that abominable and atrocious governor, Daniel Park, arrived to blast for a time with his unhallowed breath this beautiful island."

An exhaustive estimate of Park's character is hardly to be deduced from the accident of his "unhallowed breath," but is rather to be based upon a study of his social qualities as a whole. These were quite remarkable. He was a Virginian who, having committed murder at a gambling table, deserted his wife and fled to England. Here, listening to the promptings of his heart, Park realised that he had so far mistaken his vocation, and that he was by nature fitted to become an English country gentleman. Under this conviction he at once purchased an estate and was by the honest electors of the district returned as their member of Parliament. It would seem, however, that he was not destined to be a politician, for he was promptly expelled from the House of Commons for bribery. Feeling that he was still misunderstood he fled to Holland, incidentally pursued by a captain of the Queen's Guard whose wife he had dishonoured. He here joined the forces of the Duke of Marlborough, and was so highly appreciated by that general that he appointed him his aide-de-camp.

Circumstances arose which made it necessary that this versatile

[1] *Our West Indian Neighbors*, by F. A. Ober: New York, 1904.

man should be dismissed from the British Army, and, to render the process as little trying to his feelings as possible, he was sent to England with the news of the victory at Blenheim. Whether he was met by a deputation of his late constituents and tenants headed by the captain of the Queen's Guard is not known, for no ballad records "How Park brought the good news to London." Queen Anne, however, was so gratified by the announcement of the victory that she forthwith made the much-travelled Daniel her governor in Antigua. Here, in Government House, Park seems to have developed the "unhallowed breath" which for a time at least was destined to blast the island. His career as a colonial administrator was short, and is summed up in the following words, "he lost no time in provoking a riot in which he was killed by a mob who, exasperated by his crimes, literally tore him to pieces in the street." If Park was a man who had yearnings for a quiet and simple life his ambition was never attained.

The traveller on his way from St. Kitts to the next port of call, St. Thomas, will pass close to the islands of St. Eustatius and Saba. St. Eustatius—generally called Statia for short—is a little Dutch island with a remarkable past. It consists of two crater cones with less hilly ground between them. The main mountain is 1950 feet high, is wonderfully symmetrical, and, being all-predominating, gives to the island its gracious pyramidal outline. The symmetry of the hill would be complete were it not that the southern slope is broken off abruptly at the sea margin, leaving a bare white cliff, 900 feet high, called the White Wall.

The only town is Orange Town, which lies partly on the beach and partly on the cliffs adjacent. The two divisions communicate by a long, steep, sloping road. On the brink of the cliff stands an ancient and ruinous fort, Fort Orange, where still, it is said, a few rusty and dismounted cannon are to be found among the cactus and acacia. Recent visitors to the island speak of the town as poverty-stricken, dilapidated, and melancholy, its church and chief houses as decayed, and its business as well-nigh invisible. Along the beach in its whole length, are the ruins of warehouses

and stores, together with other relics of what must have been an immense shipping trade. These scattered ruins, as the *West India Pilot* remarks, "attract attention on first landing."

Now it will scarcely be believed that this barren rock of an island, with its sleepy and dejected town, once rivalled the prosperity of Tyre and Sidon. Yet the biographer of Rodney states that such was its state for at least some glorious months.[1] Still more astonishing is a statement in the "Annual Register" that at the foot of this crater cone standing out of the sea, was once held "one of the greatest auctions that ever was opened in the universe." If the Auctioneers' Institute have not the island of St. Eustatius as its crest, it is only because the members of that body have failed to realise the crowning magnificence of the sale of goods once held at Orange Town.

Statia became the rival of Tyre and Sidon and the paradise of the auctioneer after the following manner. Just before the outbreak of war between England and her American colonies commercial affairs in the West Indies were so hampered by enactments that trading of any sort became practically impossible. The Dutch, with a ready eye to business, made St. Eustatius a free port. The result was to throw the whole of the trade between England or her West Indies and the American plantations into the market-place of Orange Town. When the French sided with the Americans their merchants also made all haste for the astonished island.

Statia, however, did not draw the line at legitimate buying and selling. It became the great depôt of contraband of war, a smuggling centre and an arsenal for both the American and the French forces. Dutch men-of-war convoyed American privateers; American cargo ships carried Dutch papers. Goods poured in from Europe every day in the week, while planters on the neighbouring islands, both French and English, thought it well to hurry their possessions off to Statia for safer keeping.

The result was that the island became such a storehouse as the world has never seen. All day long and for most of the night

[1] *Rodney*, by David Hannay, page 151: London, 1891.

boats were toiling through the surf which ever breaks on the little beach before Orange Town. More than a hundred merchant ships at a time would be swinging to their anchors in the once deserted roadstead. Warehouses were erected line after line along the sands. The carpenters' hammers almost drowned the shouts of the seamen, stevedores, and slaves who struggled in a mob along the water's edge. Bags, boxes, and bales were stacked in the street for want of room in the sheds. Merchants and clerks, hot and perspiring, were busy from sunrise to sundown. A pile of tea chests in the road had to serve as an office table, while every pocket was stuffed with invoices, bills of lading, letters, ship chandlers' accounts, and miscellaneous samples.

Jews flocked to the fray. The market-place was made deafening by voices, yelling in Dutch, English, French, and Spanish, until the great pyramid that rose above the roofs might have belonged to the Tower of Babel.

This abnormal development of the island was not appreciated by the English, and so, on February 3, 1781, Rodney came down upon the dismayed Orange Town and possessed himself of it and all that it contained. It contained a great deal—goods to the value of four million pounds sterling, to say nothing of the 150 merchantmen lying in the bay. "The Jews were stripped to the skin and sent packing. The Dutch had surrendered at discretion and were treated after the manner of Alaric. To the French, who were open enemies, Rodney showed more consideration. They were allowed to go with bag and baggage."[1] Then began the great sale, the sale of four million pounds' worth of goods without reserve, the great auction of the universe. In this wise St. Eustatius became the scene of the apotheosis of the auctioneer.

After all the purchases had been cleared away, after the last ship had set sail, and after the streets had become empty and still, the exhausted inhabitants returned to the selling of yams. As they gazed down from the cliff upon the long row of deserted warehouses, and upon the awful litter on the beach, they must have felt that the little island had at least had its day.

[1] *Rodney*, by David Hannay, page 154: London, 1891.

XXXIX.

SABA THE ASTONISHING.

CLOSE to St. Eustatius is the island of Saba, a place so curious that it must rank with the islands of romance and not with things of this world. It is small and round, has a diameter of two miles, and belongs to the Dutch. It is the pinnacle of a volcanic mountain of which only the peak and crater emerge from the sea. Possessing no beach, Saba is, in the words of the mariner, "bold and steep-to" all round. Its circuit indeed is that of the wall of some cyclopean fortress. As "in general a heavy surf breaks all along the shore" it is not a place to land at, landing being indeed "extremely difficult and often dangerous."

Possessing no harbour nor anything approaching the same, Saba has yet a harbour master among its high officials. Possessing no springs, "the inhabitants chiefly depend on rain water caught in tanks."[1] There are no roads in Saba for it is "a mass of rugged mountains, with deep and precipitous ravines, through and over which are only foot-paths from house to house."[2] Unlike any other West Indian island, the majority of the population are white, and "not only white," writes Ober, "but Dutch, the good old-fashioned kind, with blue eyes, freckled, sandy complexion and flaxen hair." The inhabitants being Dutch speak English as their native tongue. The only town in Saba is on the mountain top, and being so placed it is called Bottom. In this nomenclature the founders of the colony have evidently followed the weaver in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," who, speaking of his vision, says "it shall be called Bottom's Dream because it hath no bottom."

[1] *West India Pilot*, vol. ii. page 149: London, 1899. [2] *Ibid. loc. cit.*

Now the city of Bottom can hardly be said, in the terms even of the speculative builder, to occupy an eligible site, for it is placed inside the crater. If the citizens wish to gaze upon the sea they must climb to the rim of the crater, as flies would crawl to the edge of a tea cup, and look over. They will see the ocean directly below them, at the foot of a precipice some 1300 feet high. To go down to the sea it is necessary to take a path with a slope like the roof of a house, and then to descend the Ladder, an appalling stair on the side of the cliff marked at the steepest part by steps cut out of the face of the rock. There are many people who would die rather than face the Ladder. Some would probably die if they did face it, but then Saba does not lay itself out to attract visitors.

Mr. Ober has given an account of his arrival at Saba. He reached the island at night in a drogher. "At last," he writes, "we got in near enough to launch a boat, into which I was tumbled, together with my belongings. Two stalwart black men pulled it within hail of the shore, and then, instead of landing, they split the darkness with shouts for help, yelling to some invisible person in the clouds to 'Come down.' The boat shot ahead with terrific speed straight for the rocks, and just as the shock of the impact with those rocks sent me tumbling head over heels, a strong arm seized me, yanked me out unceremoniously, and set me upright at the base of the cliff. So there I was, alone with several strange folk, number undetermined, until a lantern was lighted, when it was reduced from a multitude to two. They were black, both of them, and evidently friendly, for, after piling my luggage at the foot of the precipice, they took me by the arms and guided me to what they called the 'Ladder,' which was a narrow trail up the side of the said precipice. It was fortunate for my shattered nerves that the darkness hid the dangers of that trail from sight, for when I afterwards saw it by daylight, no money would have tempted me to essay it." [1]

It is to be noted that provisions and goods destined for Bottom have to be brought up the Ladder, so that if one of the fair-haired

[1] *Our West Indian Neighbors*, page 271 : New York, 1904.

maidens ordered a grand piano, it would be delivered to her by that particular route. Hill, in his work on Cuba and Puerto Rico, gives a photograph of the city of Bottom. It consists of a number of small and tidy houses dotted about among a perfect maze of stone walls. There are gardens around some of the dwellings, but the metropolis, regarded generally, has the reckless aspect to be expected of a town situated in a crater, and connected with the outer world by such an approach as the Ladder.

Living aloft in their volcano, in a summit city called Bottom, these simple Dutch people who speak English reach the extreme of the improbable in the nature of their staple industry. They do not make balloons nor kites. They are not astronomers, nor are they engaged in extracting nitrogen from the atmosphere. They are, of all things in the world, shipbuilders, and shipbuilders of such merit that their boats and small craft are famous all over the Windward Islands. Let it be noted that fishing smacks are not only built in a crater, but on an island which has neither beach, harbour, landing stage, nor safe anchoring ground, where no timber is produced, where no iron is to be found, and where cordage is not made. The island has indeed, except in the matter of size, no more facilities for the development of the ship-building trade than has a rock lighthouse. The production of ships from craters is hardly less wonderful than the gathering of grapes from thorns or figs from thistles.

When the Saba ship is finished it is lowered down the side of the cliff, and has then apparently to shift for itself. The women, no doubt, wave handkerchiefs from the rim of the crater as the craft takes the sea, while the boys are told not to play with stones lest they should fall upon their fathers' heads. After all the excitement of the launch is over, one can imagine the master-builder climbing up the Ladder to his crater home, as full of pride as his shortness of breath will allow.

XL.

ST. THOMAS.

ANOTHER dawn, another dim island taking shape out of the mist, another blue bay in a circle of hills, and the steamer drops her anchor with a splash in the harbour of St. Thomas.

St. Thomas is a Danish island that has seen better days. It is one of the Virgin Group, a cluster of some hundred islands, rocks and cays. Columbus named them after St. Ursula and her virgins, and would no doubt have given saintly names to the entire hundred, but the buccaneers who haunted these regions have left their mark rather than his in such titles as Rum Island, Dead Man's Chest, Salt Water Money Rock, Fallen Jerusalem, Flanagan's Pass, and the like.

They are wild, inhospitable islands, the most savage of which is Anegada, or the Drowned Island, thus called because it is water-logged with lagoons and is so low-lying as to be almost sea-swept in times of storm. Yet this amphibious place has a population of 450. It has been the scene of countless wrecks, since around it is the deadly and much-accursed Horse Shoe Reef.

It was Anegada that brought to an end the sea rovings of that wild, impetuous Don Quixote who was "like a perpetual motion," Prince Rupert of the Rhine. He started from Ireland in 1648, with seven ships, to champion the cause of the king in the far west. He sailed in the *Swallow* and, finding few opportunities for legitimate battle, took to pirating. He was a man who must always be doing something. Even when he was in prison at Linz, in his early days, he managed to learn drawing and make love to the governor's daughter. After five years on the sea, more

full of adventure than has been the life of any corsair before or since, he was caught in a storm off the Virgin Islands one night in September. Here on the dire shore of Anegada his fleet was wrecked. His brother, Prince Maurice, was lost with his ship *Defiance*; the *Honest Seaman* was cast away, and the only survivor of the dare-devil argosy was the *Swallow*. She crept home sadly crippled, and gained the coast of France in 1653, but "was too far spent and never put to sea again." The handsome, clever, wilful prince, who was ever "very sparkish in his dress," lived till 1682, to die in his bed in Spring Gardens of a commonplace fever.

Charlotte Amalia, the capital of St. Thomas, is without any question the most picturesque town in the whole sweep of the Windward Islands. Placed within a magnificent harbour, and at the foot of a circle of green hills, Charlotte Amalia makes there a bravery of colour. The town is built about three rounded spurs which jut out from the mountain's base. It seems, therefore, to be made up of three towns joined along the sea margin, each of the three a cone of bright habitations reared against the dull green of the hill.

The walls of the houses which are thus piled one above the other are, for the most part, a dazzling white. Some are yellow or grey or orange; certain of them are blue. The roofs are always a generous bright red. Between the houses and overshadowing the roofs are clumps of green trees. Here and there can be seen stone stairs climbing up through the town, gardens with creeper-covered walls, a tufted palm, a many-arched arcade, the balustrades of shady terraces. Viewed from the sea Charlotte Amalia would seem to be a place for those who make holiday—all gaily tinted villas and palaces, where the factory chimney, the warehouse, and the woful suburb are unknown.

Viewed at close quarters it is a little less charming. A long, level street, clean and bright, runs from one end of the settlement to the other. The remaining streets are engaged in clambering up the sides of the three hills. The town contains many handsome buildings, a few of which are dignified by age, together with shops and stores of the colonial type which breathe generally the odour

of bay rum. The names of the streets are in Danish, as are also certain official notices, but with these exceptions there is little to suggest a colony of Denmark. The language of the people is English, the newspaper is in English, while the determination of the islanders to profess that tongue is shown in the following tavern wall announcement which faces the stranger on landing:

"Cool sherbeft and other such sippings."

The island itself—as surveyed from the summit of the hill above the town—is a little desolate. The country appears to be uninhabited, given up to loneliness and allowed to grow wild. It is covered everywhere with low bushes, as if the land had relapsed again into savagery. At one's feet, looking northwards, is a most enchanting sandy cove, bordered by a circle of white foam where it meets the sea. This is just such a solitary beach as Robinson Crusoe might have found himself upon, and just such a stretch of sand as that on which he discovered the footprints of Friday. Far away are some rugged islands, which seem to belong to a world from which man has long departed. These are the rocky islets of Tobago, Hans Lollik, and Jost van Dyke.

St. Thomas once had an evil reputation for unhealthiness. The cemetery in the town testifies that this was not unmerited, and that there were some grounds for Kingsley's description of the place as "a Dutch oven for cooking fever in." Now, thanks to enlightened sanitary measures, it can claim to be a quite wholesome settlement.

The hospital of St. Thomas is on the outskirts of the town. It is a hospital of seventy beds, maintained by the Government, but at the same time very generously dowered by the good Queen of Denmark. The majority of patients are negroes of an unsavoury type, who seem to be the subjects of only such disorders as are obtrusively unpleasant. Many are insane or paralysed—for rum is cheap in St. Thomas. Many are the victims of loathsome, long-neglected sores. It is a depressing place, even for a hospital, a dreary yard surrounded by low, one-storied buildings, with corrugated iron roofs. Yet everything

is clean and in perfect order, while the care of the sick is above criticism.

Moving busily from hut to hut in the compound is a bright, happy-looking Danish lady. She is the good genius of the dismal square, the matron, the nurse, the friend, the comforter. With the exception of a servant she is the only white woman in this refuge for the miserable. She lives here alone, cut off from all the reasonable joys of life, uncomplaining, undaunted, a rare and heroic figure. The sick people to whom she devotes her life are Danish subjects, fed and housed by Denmark, but they neither speak the language of the country which fosters them, nor have they, it would seem, the least concern in its existence. Dirty for the most part, ill to manage, not free from sordidness, they are ungracious and ungrateful, and yet to their care this noble woman devotes ungrudgingly her sympathy, her motherliness, her consummate skill.

At Scutari the "Lady of the Lamp" moved through grateful wards with the eyes of her country upon her. Here, in an obscure hospital in a far-off island, a sister of mercy ministers to unheroic sick who own her not, who will not call themselves her countrymen, and who see not in her smiling face the graciousness of self-sacrifice.

XLI.

MEMOIRS OF EDWARD TEACH, MARINER.

ON the respective summits of two of the hills of Charlotte Amalia there stands a castle. The larger is called Blue Beard's Castle, the smaller Black Beard's. It is claimed that they were the strongholds of pirates distinguished by those names. St. Thomas was certainly a favourite haunt of the buccaneer, and, although the sea rover had little leisure for building castles, he was not above occupying premises erected by others.

The two strong places in question are round towers of undoubted antiquity, each with a maximum of wall and a minimum of window. Blue Beard's Castle has the appearance of a fortress or refuge of the block-house type, but the castle of Black Beard is singularly suggestive of a stone windmill deprived of its wooden caps and sails. It would be little short of profanity to hint that this pirate's lair is no more than a discarded mill, for the people of the island, although hazy in their details, are firm in the belief that the tower was the fastness of Black Beard, the corsair. Of Blue Beard nothing whatever is known, nor do even the sellers of postcards suggest that he was in any way connected with the famous autocrat of the nursery tale. Black Beard, however, was a definite character, a pirate of pirates, who in the early part of the eighteenth century was the terror of the Caribbean Sea. I can find no evidence that he ever held the mill-like tower which keeps green his memory in St. Thomas, but it would be rank heresy to suppose that such evidence is not forthcoming.

Black Beard's non-professional name was Edward Teach. He was a native of Bristol, and a mariner. In the pursuit of his calling he came to Jamaica, where, it may be assumed, he was led

astray by evil companions, picked up in the taverns of Port Royal. Anyhow, in 1716 Master Teach took to pirating. It is claimed that when a man adopts a calling he should strive with all his might to excel in it. Edward was evidently influenced by this teaching, and acted upon it, with the result that he attained to the very highest distinction in his profession. Indeed, such were his ability and application that in two short years he rose to the position of the world's greatest pirate. In this anxious and dangerous vocation he is without an equal. The stage pirate with black ringlets and a belt full of knives, who sits on a gunpowder cask and scatters murder aimlessly around him, is a mere babe and suckling to Edward Teach.

This highly depraved mariner was no mere cut-throat, however: he was the Napoleon of scoundreldom. There is a portrait of him in Johnson's "History of the Pyrates."[1] He is here represented as a large man whose repulsive face is almost hidden by a mane-like beard, the hair of which, black as coal, grew up to his very eyes. So long was this beard that he twisted it into small tails tied with ribbons, "after the manner of our Ramilies wiggs,"[2] and turned the ends over his ears. He had a head like a brindled gnu. Under his hat, which was of felt and of the Dick Turpin pattern, he stuck lighted matches or fuses which, when he was at work, would glow horribly on either side of his eyes. He is depicted in a long-skirted coat with immense cuffs to the sleeves, and in breeches, stockings, and shoes. In his hand is a cutlass, while in his belt no less than six pistols are stuck. It is to be noticed that he avoids the open jack-boots, the hat feather and the immense belt buckle of the common stage villain.

Teach was an execrable and unholy rascal, who was a shuddering horror to every one with whom he was associated. He occasionally robbed and murdered his own crew. Once, when in a blithesome mood, he marooned seventeen of his men on a desert island. Here they would have starved to death, as he hoped they would, had not Major Stede Bonnet, the amateur freebooter

[1] Vol. i.: London, 1726. [2] Johnson's *History of the Pyrates.*

of Barbados, come to their rescue.[1] It was just about this period that Teach married as his fourteenth wife "a young creature of sixteen." It is not stated how it came about that she was drawn to Teach, or by what charms he won her budding affection.

Black Beard was a man of resource, who could be relied upon to invent means for relieving even the monotony of a dull voyage. Thus one bright afternoon, when the sloop was lying becalmed and rocking to the lazy roll that makes the ocean in the tropics appear as if it breathed, the pirates found the time pass heavily. They had polished their weapons until they shone like silver. They had gambled until half the company were penniless. They had fought until there was nothing more to fight about, and it was too hot to sleep. Indeed there was nothing to be done, but to lean over the rail and throw bits of rotten beef at the sharks. In this dilemma the ready-witted Teach, hatless and shoeless, and "a little flushed with drink," stumbles up on deck, and, holding on to the shrouds, makes this happy proposal to his bored companions. "Come," says this genial soul, "let us make a little hell of our own, and see how long we can bear it." Whereupon he and two or three others, helped by suggestive kicks, drop down into the hold and, having closed the hatches, sit on the stones of the ballast. Here in the reeking dark they set fire to "several pots full of brimstone and other inflammable matters," and so produced a replica of the atmosphere of the Pit. The captain's playmates, livid with asphyxia and with faces streaming from the heat, soon made a rush for the sunny deck, but Teach's ugly head was the last to come up the hatch, and it was always a pride and a pleasure to him to remember that he held out the longest, while he was always gratified to hear that his face, on emerging, was as the face of a half-hanged man.

This distinguished pirate had, besides his ready wit, social qualities of quite a rare order. For example, one night he was entertaining in his cabin two friends—Israel Hands, the master of the sloop, and the pilot who had brought the ship into harbour. The entertainment seems to have consisted mainly in the con-

[1] See page 25.

sumption of tobacco and rum. The small cabin, lit as it was by a solitary candle, was probably close. During a pause in the conversation Teach, with a smile on his face, cocked two pistols carefully, then, blowing out the candle, he crossed his hands and discharged the weapons at his company. As the outcome of this unexpected attention, Israel was shot through the knee and lamed for life. "The other pistol," the chronicle says, "did no execution." When the candle was relit, the captain's guests very naturally asked him what he meant by this display of musketry. He replied by damning them both to eternal fire, and, after cursing them at sufficient length, he explained, in a friendly way, that "if he did not kill one of them now and then they would forget who he was."

Probably Hands as he lay on the floor, watching the blood spurt out of his knee, may have muttered that he did not believe in artificial aids to memory.

Edward's end was not peace. He and his allies had so harried the American Main, that in 1718 the Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia offered a reward of 40*l.* for the capture of any pirate captain, and the special prize of 100*l.* for Edward Teach, alive or dead.

Black Beard at the moment was resting from his labours. He had hit upon a green sheltered cove at the mouth of the Ocracoke inlet, a romantic spot that pleased his fancy. His whereabouts was revealed to a certain Lieutenant Maynard, of H.M.S. *Pearl*, who lost no time in manning a sloop and starting for Teach's quiet haven. Now Teach was informed that Maynard was after him, but the pirate declined to stir. He had no regard for Maynard and, moreover, the placid scenery of the creek comforted him. Indeed he prepared to meet the man-o'-war's man by drinking all night with a merchant skipper who chanced to have dropped in.

As the morning dawned Maynard crept up the inlet, and there to his joy was the pirate craft lying at her anchor, a picture of peace. As the *Pearl's* sloop approached, Black Beard seized a hatchet and cut his cable, with the result that his vessel, on which

was now hoisted a black flag, drifted ashore. This was a nimble move, for the buccaneer saw that the sloop drew too much water to come near him, and Maynard, realising that fact also, anchored within half-gunshot of his quarry. Neither vessel carried any ordnance.

Maynard was determined to get alongside the pirate, so with desperate haste he began to throw his ballast overboard, together with the kedge and every spar and scrap of iron he could spare. More than that he staved in every water cask; until feeling that he had freeboard enough he slipped his anchor, set his mainsail and jib, and bore down upon the stranded sea robber.

As he came on Teach, with the fuses glowing under his hat, "hailed him in a rude manner," cursed him and defied him in fact, and standing on the taffrail drank to his speedy damnation in a goblet of liquor. The man-o'-war's man now sent off a boarding party in small boats, which same Teach met with such a volley of small shot that he killed and wounded twenty-nine men, leaving scarcely crew enough to row back to the sloop for shelter. After this incident Teach's ship "fell broadside to the shore," with her deck all aslant.

Maynard sailed slowly nearer with his canvas hanging slack, for the wind was very light. He sent all his men below so that he and the helmsman, who was lying down "snug," were the only people on the silent deck. Teach, surrounded by his sullen and villainous gang, shrieked out the chorus of a sea song as the sloop drew near, and when she had drifted close enough he pelted her deck with grenadoes.[1]

At this moment the two vessels touched, whereupon Teach and his crew, with hideous yells and a great gleam of cutlass blades, leapt upon the sloop's deck. They leapt through the smoke with which the ship was still smothered, and out of the cloud the awful figure of the buccaneer emerged, making for Maynard. At the same time the men hidden in the sloop scrambled up from the hold, and the riot of the fight began.

As Teach and Maynard met they both fired at each other

[1] Case bottles filled with powder and slugs, and provided with a quick match.

point blank. The lieutenant dodged, but the robber was hit in the face, and the blood was soon dripping from his beard, the ends of which were, as usual, tucked up over his ears. There was no time to fumble with pistols now. So they fought with cutlasses. Teach, spitting the blood out of his mouth, swore that he would hack Maynard's soul from his body; but his opponent was too fine an adept with the sword to be easily disposed of. It was a fearful duel: a trial of the robber's immense strength against the officer's deftness.

They chased each other about the deck, stumbling across dead bodies, knocking down snarling men who, clutched together, were fighting with knives. Ever through the mirk could be seen the buccaneer's grinning teeth and evil eyes; ever above the hubbub and scuffling rose his murderous war cry. Both were wounded, both breathless.

At last Maynard, in defending himself from a terrific blow, had his sword blade broken off at the hilt. Now was the pirate's chance. He aimed a slash at Maynard. It fell short and only hacked a few of his fingers off, for as the blow fell one of the sloop's men brought his cutlass down upon the back of the buccaneer's red neck, making a horrible wound which might have been done by an executioner's axe. Teach turned upon him and cut him to the deck.

For the moment the current of the fight changed. The decks were very slippery from blood. Teach kicked off his shoes so as to get a better hold of the planks. Half a dozen of the sloop's men were against him now. He stood with his back to the bulwarks, a scarcely human figure. Panting horribly, he roared like a maddened bull. His dripping cutlass still kept those he called dogs at bay. He had received twenty-five wounds, five of which were from bullets. Blood was streaming down his hairy chest. Blood clots dangled from his fantastic beard in place of the bows of ribbon. The muscles of his neck having been cut through his head fell forwards hideously, but there was still a defiant smile on his lips.

At last he drew a pistol and was cocking it at arm's length,

but before the trigger was drawn, and before a man touched him, his beast-like eyelids closed and he fell back on the railing, dead.

His few remaining men dropped overboard and the little creek became still once more. Lieutenant Maynard cut off Teach's head (it was already nearly severed at the back) and hung it up on the "boltsprit end" of his sloop. With this strange ornament swinging from the bows, and with thirteen pirates safe in the hold, Maynard set sail for Bath Town in North Carolina. Here the thirteen were promptly hanged.

The only one of Black Beard's men who escaped was Israel Hands, who was ashore at the time, nursing a pistol wound in his knee.

XLII.

A HARBOUR ENTRY.

It is a romantic and even tragic entry, the entry into the lagoon-like harbour of San Juan. There are many San Juans in these seas, but this is San Juan Bautista, the capital of the island of Puerto Rico. The island was discovered by Columbus on his second voyage, and was colonised by the Spaniards with much murdering and savagery. Spanish it has remained, with unimportant interruptions, until late years—until 1898, in fact, when it became a dependency of the United States of America.

Saint John the Baptist is a walled town, old and weather-beaten, very massively fortified, and hoary with annals of rough fighting in which sakers and demi-culverins, fire-ships and pikes have borne stout parts. The entrance into the harbour from the open Atlantic is narrow and wild-looking. On one side, on a point of ragged land, is a Spanish fort, a pile of terrific and heartless walls, yellow with age and streaked with black as if with tears. On the other side is a low, rocky island which is often hidden by drifting spray, the Isla de Cabras. Between the two is the eddying sea passage, where smooth-backed combers hurl themselves through, brushing their great shoulders against the slimy fortress wall, and then crashing upon the rocks beyond the glacis as well as upon the shore of the battered island.

When the wind is northerly and the ocean swell high and arrogant the ship making for the haven is hurried breathless down the gap, with much rolling to and fro, as if a hand beneath the sea was lifting the keel. In taking this channel in heavy weather even a tourist steamer must feel that, just for one fine moment,

it is an object of romance. The thrill, however, dies away when the anchor is dropped, and the deck is boarded by postcard vendors and the owners of cabs.

San Juan is as fine an example of a walled city as will be found among the islands or along the Spanish Main. Within the circuit of its formidable black masonry the town stands huddled, although of recent times the houses, with an assurance of security, have crept out boldly from beyond the fortifications and have settled themselves down in open suburbs. The town in reality occupies a narrow island separated from the mainland by a channel which, passing beneath the San Antonio bridge, winds into the harbour by Isla Grande and by Miraflores Bay. The sea margin of the island presents to the Atlantic a cliff of sinister rock, 100 feet high, surmounted always by the menacing black wall.

The city is on a slope, for the land drops from the cliff summit to the level shore of the harbour. Thus of San Juan little is to be seen from the sea, save the ill-looking forts, the black wall, and a suspicious tower or two peeping above the battlements. But to the placid tree-encircled harbour, to the harbour of sunny creeks and silver shoals, the city opens its arms and its very heart.

The veteran fort that stands at the harbour mouth, brooding over the swirling entry, is called El Morro. It was built, they say, in 1584, while the gaunt wall which surrounds the town was not completed until 1771. Morro Castle, therefore, was well known to Drake and to that aristocratic pirate the Earl of Cumberland. There is no doubt but that it has been greatly strengthened since these two sturdy Englishmen mocked and defied it. It is now an immense fortress, with three tiers of batteries facing the sea, with spray-wetted platforms and sally-ports, under whose doors the sea creeps in at times of high tide. Its horrible walls are made one with the dead cliff. There are so many loopholes in its front that the place seems more full of eyes than the head of the giant Argus. In each black, skull-like socket, where would be the pupil of a globe, is the muzzle of a gun, an iris of steel.

This San Juan, this very harbour mouth, comes into the scene of one of the most pathetic of the sea stories of England, the story of the last voyage of John Hawkins and Francis Drake.

These great Elizabethan sailors, kinsmen and life-long friends, had followed the sea from boyhood. Ever famous as two of the most conspicuous figures in an age of heroic pioneering, the tale of their lives is one long saga of daring and adventure. None had done more than they to break the sea power of Spain, or to lay the foundations of Britain's position as mistress of the sea. Both had fought against the Armada in the memorable year of 1588; both had made themselves "so redoubtable to the Spaniards" that their very names were breathed with awe in the court of Philip; both were possessed by a hate of Spain so fervid that it became little less than a tenet of religion.

This last expedition was to some extent a voyage of revenge. The foul treachery of the Spaniards at San Juan d'Ulloa had never been forgotten, forgiven or effaced. More than that, Hawkins's only son, Richard, had been captured by the Spaniards, together with his ship *Dainty*. The lad was now lying, as his father believed, in some torture chamber of the Inquisition on the Spanish Main. The old man, in spite of his failing health and the need of a final spell of peace, could not rest in England. He was ever haunted by the picture of his beloved boy, the delight of his life, either utterly alone in a cramped cell or in a vaulted room wherein were a rack and hooded figures. He could hear the creaking of the wheels, the twang of the rope about the livid wrists as the lever moved through another notch. He could catch the gasping breath, the grinding of the teeth, and see the sweat streaming from the brow. Moreover in Plymouth was Judith, his son's young wife, and the sight of her anguish was beyond all bearing. So he went to Drake, his kinsman and old shipmate. "Would he go with him?" "Go with him! Yes, a thousand times!"

Thus the two got together a fleet, and sailed away from Plymouth on August 28, 1595, just two years after Richard Hawkins had been taken prisoner. They were both old and

broken-down men, although Drake was only fifty-five and Hawkins sixty-three. They had a fine fleet of twenty-seven ships and a force of 2500 men and boys. No less than six vessels were ships of the Queen. Of these Drake commanded the *Defiance*, 500 tons, and Hawkins the *Garland*, 700 tons.

In many a year had these two sailed out of Plymouth harbour bound for the West Indies or the Main. This was the last occasion of their going, the last time that either of them would see the coasts of Devon. As the familiar cliffs faded in the gloom they vanished for ever; and we may be sure that the last figure they would see before the land grew dim would be Judith, praying to God that they may have good speed.

The voyage was disastrous from the beginning to the end. The aged admiral, who was spending the last blood in his veins in the quest for his son, was a dying man. Drake, the intrepid fighter, the scourge of the seas, the West Indian Vanderdecken, had lost his cunning and his prestige. Spanish spies had gone ahead with news of their projects.

The English had not been long at sea before a painful scene took place, at the council table, between the two old friends. They disagreed as to the policy of a forced landing on the Canaries. Drake's advice prevailed; an invasion was attempted, but it failed utterly.

Beaten off, they laid a course for the familiar Caribbees, made Domenica, and rested at anchor under the shelter of Marie Galante. Here befell another calamity. The hindmost ship of the fleet, the *Francis*, was taken by the Spaniards, and the crew sent as prisoners to Puerto Rico after the plans of the English had been extracted from the master by torture. It was Drake's intention now to sack San Juan of Puerto Rico, but it was not until November that they headed their ships northwards in search of a channel through the Virgin Islands.

More than two entire months had passed away and nothing had been done. The time was long for a man whose days were numbered. One can picture the aged admiral as he leaned over the ship's side, looking for the land that was so slow in coming—

a fine figure of an old sea lion, although his hair and his trim moustache were white and his face furrowed, and although the hand that clutched the bulwarks was thin and nerveless. The goal he was destined never to behold. Culebra was passed on November 12, and on the same day, just at the hour of sundown, the easternmost point of Puerto Rico came in sight. John Hawkins was now rapidly nearing his end, and the last sound that would have fallen upon his dying ears was the cry of the man at the look-out, "Land ahead!"[1] It was a fitting death, to die at sea amidst the scenes of his brilliant exploits, to die at the time of the setting of the sun, at the moment that the long-sought shore was sighted.

In the meanwhile the Spaniards at San Juan were awaiting the coming of Drake and his ships. We have an account of his attack upon the town preserved in Spanish records of the time.[2] The city was astir. The women and children were being hurried away to places of safety. They pattered over the bridge to the mainland, a fluttering, chattering cavalcade, in litters, on mules or asses, and on foot, carrying with them a jumble of household treasures, silks and cooking pots, bed linen and pet monkeys.

Men were lining up in the streets, in the Plaza, and in the castle square. They mustered a force of 10,000, including 800 mariners, and fifty horsemen with lance and buckler. On El Morro were mounted no less than twenty-seven "very good brass guns." The cathedral bell was tolling, for the bishop was about to offer Mass, and to preach a sermon to all who could be spared from the ramparts. Merchants were busy hiding treasure in vaults or under floors, and in holes dug in gardens by night.

A ship called the *Capitana de Tierra Firme*, and another belonging to Señor Pedro Milanes, were sunk in the narrow entry to the port—an exciting spectacle, no doubt, for the gaping crowd

[1] "At the easternmost end of St. John . . . Sir John Hawkins departed this life." Drake's Report.

[2] *Spanish Account of Drake at San Juan, Puerto Rico.* Hakluyt Society.

at the foot of El Morro, since the sea runs strong in the passage and the scuttling of two great ships is no mean sight.

On a certain Wednesday, at the break of day, the English fleet appeared on the eastern horizon, rising up spectre-like against the red glow of the dawn. Everyone rushed to the sea-wall and gazed eastwards, their faces lit by the enlarging light. The fleet came on very slowly, for the wind was faint. In the van was a single pinnace, with some small boats taking soundings. Then came, in solemn order, the six great galleons of the Queen, with the *Defiance* leading. Among the six was the *Garland*, bearing in her state cabin the body of the admiral. After the Queen's galleons came the privateers, and then, on either wing as well as in the rear, the little pinnaces.

The anxious silence was broken at last by the boom of a gun. It was fired from the Boqueron battery on the east point of the island, and was directed at the boats with the scouting parties. They cleared off nimbly, but the fleet advanced with sober deliberation, and cast anchor opposite to the harbour mouth.

Drake loved to show his contempt of Spaniards at all times, but on this occasion the parade cost him dear, for in the evening as he was supping in his cabin on the *Defiance*, with ports open and the table ablaze with lights, a round shot from El Morro crashed through the ship's side, smashing his chair under him, and killing his friend, Sir Nicholas Clifford, on the spot.

The next morning being Thursday and St. Clement's Day the English fleet, from whose guns not one single shot had been fired, were found to have moved westward to an anchorage near the Isla de Cabras, that spray-driven island over against the castle. This was mysterious and disconcerting, especially as small boats were hovering about the entry to the harbour busy with the lead. There were five of the enemy's ships in the haven, and it was Drake's intent to set fire to these, and having put them out of action, to attack the city from the harbour side.

During the whole of Thursday there was no stir of life in the fleet, but at ten o'clock, when it was dead dark, twenty-five boats with muffled oars made for the harbour entry. They crept in

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO, AS SEEN FROM THE HARBOUR.

FORT SAN CRISTOBAL, SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO.

close to the rock, feeling their way to the place where the ships were lying. They set fire to their sterns, and in a moment San Juan was awake and in an uproar.

As the flames mounted up the masts, shrouds and yards appeared through the smoke like the spars and rigging of phantom ships; men were seen rushing to and fro on the flaming decks, or dropping out of port-holes. The fires lit up the English boats as they darted over the shining surface of the haven. In a second the "very good brass guns" on El Morro were lashing the water with shot and shell. The English cheered as they battered the ships with "fire potts" and bombs. The Spaniards replied with musketry and with stones picked up from the ballast.

Some nine or ten of the English boats were sunk and the crews drowned, or shot down as they swam, or hacked to death as they clung to the channels of Spanish ships. One frigate, the *Magdalena*, was burnt to the water's edge; many of her sailors died in the flames, others were killed by small shot from Drake's men. The captain, jumping overboard, swam through the glare and the crowd of boats to the frigate *Sancta Ysabel*, dodging many a cutlass cut at his head on the way.

The fires on the other ships were put out. The fight lasted only for one hour, during which time the whole harbour and town were lit by the glare of flames, so that faces could be seen on the walls, while the air was rent by an incessant cannonade, by the patter of small arms, the crackling of burning planks and the yells of men. The attempt had failed. The British were driven off with the loss—so the Spaniards reckoned—of over 400 men.

When Friday came Drake was planning another attack. He would sail his galleons right into the port, into the desperate passage, and destroy the four remaining ships of the enemy with cannon shot. The Spaniards could hear the rattle of his capstans as the anchors came up to the chant of the men. The attacking ships worked up to windward, luffed up and came about, and then with the trade-wind on the port quarter, sailed under full canvas for the harbour mouth.

The Spaniards had that morning already sunk two more vessels in the entry, and as Drake swept down upon them they scuttled another in the fair-way, making five in all. The passage was now impossible, so the *Defiance* and her consorts as they neared the cliff put their helms hard-a-port, and ran silently down to their old quarters off the Isla de Cabras. It was "at vesper time" when they dropped anchor there. Drake, the invincible Drake, had been again repulsed.

That very night, when it was so dark that none could see, the English fleet bore away—beaten.

Before they left there was one duty to be done. By the gunwale of the *Garland* lay an object sewn up in canvas, with a round shot secured at one end. It was lit by the light of a solitary lantern, the glimmer of which revealed also the figure of Drake standing bareheaded and with downcast eyes. The plank on which the strange bundle lay was tilted by trembling hands and the body of John Hawkins dropped into the everlasting sea. Thus did the two old shipmates part company.

XLIII.

THE MAN WITH A GLOVE IN HIS HAT.

THREE years after Drake's departure another Englishman looked in at San Juan of Puerto Rico. The visitor on this occasion was the Right Honourable the Earl of Cumberland, M.A. Cambridge, and pirate. He was the admiral of a large privateering expedition which had sailed out of Plymouth harbour on March 6, 1598. The fleet consisted of twenty ships, all of which had been provided at the admiral's own charges. The noble earl had given to his flagship the impressive name of the *Scourge of Malice.*

After some gentle pirating by the way the fleet reached Domenica, where they rested so that the sailors might find "refreshing." This was in May. On June 6 Lord Cumberland—following deliberately, as it would seem, the course that Drake had taken—reached San Juan Bautista. Being entirely unexpected by the Spaniards he crept up to the coast at night, and landed 600 men half a league to the east of the castle of El Morro. He landed them at a spot where the governor was confident that no body of men could make the shore; yet his Excellency should by this time have known the British better.

He approached the unconscious town along the level way where now rumble the electric tramcars. Dividing his force into two parties, he simultaneously rushed the town and attacked the fort at the first dawning of the day. He had caught the Spaniards unawares, and after two hours of wild street and drawbridge fighting San Juan was his. There were very few soldiers in the fort, as a strong force had been recently despatched to Cartagena, where an attack of the tiresome English was hourly expected.

My Lord of Cumberland must have felt that the world was going well with him, for San Juan was rich and prosperous.

After he had made a survey of the merchants' storehouses, of the ships in the haven, and of the back parlours of the money-lenders, he probably walked to that ragged point of the island where El Morro looks down upon the harbour entry. Knowing well the story of Drake's desperate assault he must have viewed this narrow stretch of water with some emotion, for he and the great captain had been friends. It is probable indeed that he had with him one of Drake's own seamen, one who had taken part in the actual fight in '95, and who could explain where the Spanish frigates lay, where his own boat had crept in, and show perhaps with some savageness the very spot where he received the cutlass wound which had left that ugly seam across his face. More than that, with his hairy arm outstretched, he would point to the westward, across the sea, to the place where the body of Sir John Hawkins had been committed to the deep.

It is probable also that some of the wreckage of the fire-ships sunk in the entry would still be there to be seen. This long dark shape beneath the sun-lit comber was the hull of the *Capitana*: that mast and uprising poop belonged to Pedro Milanes' ship: that wreck with the ghostly deck-house door still swinging to and fro in the wash of the sea, must be the craft that was scuttled just as Drake bore down in the *Defiance* on that eventful Friday afternoon.

The pirate peer had hoped to make San Juan a base from which he could conduct an extensive and profitable buccaneering business in the adjacent districts. Unhappily for this purpose the fever fell upon his men, and killed them in such numbers that his force was soon reduced to less than half its strength. Cumberland feared nothing that he could see, but this invisible horror filled him with a numbing dread. He saw the strong man dragged to the ground by unseen hands, his face become yellow as if from fear, his eyes glare from his head as if he beheld the vampire face to face, his fingers wandering to and fro as if in search of a clue, his voice toneless and unhuman, like the voice of a ghoul.

His resolve was soon taken. With those who lived he hurried on board the ships and sought the wholesome sea, pressing for

home with the good assurance that the shadow of death could be out-distanced, and that his men were safe when once he was within the charmed circle of Plymouth Sound. He left Puerto Rico on August 14, and made the coast of England on September 16, without further adventure.

Of the acts of this remarkable Cambridge graduate in San Juan, and of all that he did, and of the havoc he wrought, a full writing exists in the chronicles of one Samuel Champlain—a Frenchman with an English-sounding name.[1] Champlain was merely an early tourist, inquisitive and fond of making boyish maps. He reached San Juan de Puerto Rico not very long after Lord Cumberland had left. He found the island "pretty agreeable," he says, but "the air very hot." From a tourist's point of view there was not much to be seen. The English had pillaged the town very thoroughly, had burnt most of the houses, had wrecked the fortress and thrown down the ramparts. Moreover they had taken away all the ships in the harbour to the number of twelve, as well as fifty pieces of artillery of cast iron.

The English, together with the fever, had made the city so vilely unpleasant that the inhabitants had fled to the wilds. Indeed, Champlain says that there were only four white people in the place. He probably met one of these as he walked up the ruined street from the quay, and had, as a sympathetic Frenchman, to listen to lamentations more acute and varied than those of Jeremiah. If the citizen was a merchant he would take the tourist into his ruined store and, with spread out arms, show him what the perfidious English had done, and ask him what he thought of it. As the two sat upon rifled chests, cursing the British, it is possible that Champlain and his host cheered themselves with a little brandy from an unravished hiding-place. They would then take a stroll round the ruins, hear tales of woe from the three other white people, and watch the wretched Indians at work repairing the ramparts.

It only remains to speak of the personality of the man who wrought all this ill. George, Earl of Cumberland, was forty years

[1] Samuel Champlain's *Voyage*, 1599–1602. Hakluyt Society, 1859.

old when he took San Juan. He was a peer of bold and romantic spirit, with a fine passion for adventure worthy of the picturesque days of Elizabeth. His early life is unkindly described as having been "irregular." He was a courtier, a gambler, a man of immense strength and courage, perfect in all knightly exercises, and a consistently faithless husband. At the age of twenty-eight the conviction came upon him that a corsair's life was the only one that gave scope to his yearnings and his ideals. He thereupon wandered to and fro over the sea for years as a knight-errant, or, according to the estimate of some, as a nautical Don Quixote. In the calling of a buccaneer he was successful beyond all reasonable deserts. He commanded a ship against the Spanish Armada. He was a Knight of the Garter.

It is little to be wondered if this handsome, strong, and splendidly dressed dare-devil was in favour with Queen Elizabeth. "He wore her glove, set with diamonds, as a plume in his hat." So far as I am aware nothing is known of the pretty circumstances which led to the bestowal of the glove, of the bold corsair's sighs or of his lady's graciousness. Certain it is that this soft thing which had once touched the warm fingers of his Queen became for life his crest and badge. One may be sure that he wore it when he led his men up to the walls of the city on that morning in June. It may be that for years in Puerto Rico some story was handed down to the children of how the great gate of San Juan was rushed by a giant Englishman wearing a lady's glove in his hat.

There is a portrait of the earl in the National Portrait Gallery. It was painted in 1588, the year of the Armada, when he was thirty years of age. It shows a man with a fine vigorous face, a small moustache, a pointed beard, and long, curly brown hair. His armour and his dress are magnificent, while jewels of price hang about his neck. On his head is a white hat with plumes. In front of it is his lady's glove so folded as to show the claret-coloured velvet cuff. It is a dainty glove, bright with diamonds, and made to encircle none but a little wrist. It would not be ill matched, in sooth, when its fragile fingers were lying in the grip of the sailor's mighty hand.

XLIV.

THE SAN JUAN OF TO-DAY.

SAN JUAN of Puerto Rico is a Spanish city of dashing colours, very pleasant to see as it breaks into view when entering the harbour. The houses are packed together within the great black wall, there being but little green to relieve the pile of many-windowed, many-towered stucco and stone. The narrow streets are paved and clean, and, although a little oppressive, are refreshed at every turn by glimpses of the sea. The houses, mostly flat-roofed, are lavish in balconies and sun-shutters, in barred windows, and in lazy courtyards full of shadows. Carts drawn by blasé-looking oxen creak and groan by the side of electric tramcars, while mules, covered with the dust of far-off roads, are constantly plodding through the city gates. There are, in the town, certain much-painted churches, some of great age, a central plaza, public buildings too dazzling to look upon when the sun is bright, infinite taverns to meet the infinite leisure of the Spaniard, and many curious by-lanes reminiscent of Madrid.

The folk in the street are, as to their complexions, for the most part white, yellow or cinnamon brown. Among them are handsome men and beautiful women, with a still greater number who are mean and undersized, and not free from suspicions of degeneracy. There are divers old Spanish families in the island, some of whom may have "come over" with Ponce de Leon. They have preserved, through long centuries and to their own detriment, the hauteur and the exclusiveness of a conquering people. In spite of 1898, San Juan is still Spanish to the core.

The negro is not much in evidence except with the ox-waggon or the mules, or squatting by baskets of fruit exposed along the

wayside. Everywhere are to be seen proofs of the excellence of the American administration, with signs of the times, which show that no mean part of the trade of the city is falling into American hands.

At the east end of the town, and by the edge of the sea, is the mighty fort of San Cristobal, built in 1771. It covers an immense area, being indeed in itself a small walled city. That side which looks seaward shows a relentless wall at whose foot break, with sounds of thunder, the rollers from the Atlantic. Here and there a stone sentry box juts out from the curtain—a human feature among this mountainous heap of masonry.

About the fortress is a great fosse with a heavy scarp on either side. Beyond the fosse are confusing outworks—a tenaille or two in the enceinte ditch, with possibly a caponière across the same. All the awe-inspiring and amazing features of a huge stronghold are here displayed—bastions, domed magazines, mysterious alleys, precipices of stone, ravines of masonry, paved platforms, repellent doorways.

When Fort Cristobal was built at the end of the eighteenth century it was a wonder for men to see. Here at last was the place impregnable. Here was the challenge, the gauntlet thrown down by the Spaniard to the sea rover whatever his breed. There is about the citadel even now all the arrogance of the strong man armed, the hush of a place that deals with death, the cruelty of cunning walls that bristle with means to kill. Fort Cristobal with its boastful parade of the resources of war might be a temple to the God of Battle, a palace of Bellona.

Possibly the most haunting features of the great fort are the dungeons. Tales of the Middle Ages would lead one to expect that the prison doors would be approached by way of a dark and winding stair, or by vaulted passages muffled with mould. In this particular stronghold, however, there is a certain mockery about the entry to the torture chambers.

In a little square, between two high walls, is a plat of grass. On one side the square is open to the sea, being indeed bounded by a parapet where an idler might lean over and watch the waves. Among the grass of this monastic lawn are many sensitive plants,

as well as a purple flower very like a violet. At the foot of one of the walls which shut in this quiet close is a black gap, low and narrow, like the opening into a den. It is so low that one has to stoop to enter it.

It leads into a downward-sloping passage which makes its way under the mass of the fortifications. The tunnel stretches far into the depths, until the comforting gleam of light at the entrance fades to a small disc of haze and then vanishes entirely, leaving the gloom trackless. By the time the dungeons are reached the air is already suffocating, while there is a sense of being crushed under an avalanche of rock.

The passage leads to some six cells, mere cramped recesses lined with stone. Each shows a niche in the wall subtly contrived to take a human body if bent up in the sitting position. There is a groove cut in the roof to take the nape of the neck, the chin would be pressed almost to the knees, while an iron bar bolted across the chest would keep the victim still, as well as hold up the limp body when death had made it helpless.

No light of day can ever reach these catacombs. No sound can penetrate so far. Such air as finds its way thus deep into the earth is spent and tainted. Here is it possible to realise the circumstances of being buried alive, to apprehend the crushing to death by inches, the struggle to lift a mountain of stone, the agony of being throttled, the eternal dark, the sense of being abandoned. Here the trapped wretch would be pinned, gasping like a drowning man, crumpled up like a hunchback, until he shrivelled to a thing of leather, and in the end to a mere knot of contorted bones.

Upon these dungeons have been expended infinite labour, complacent skill, cool precision, and diabolical ingenuity. They will remain for ever as a monument of what is possible to be conceived in the bitter depths of human cruelty and hate. To retraverse the back-breaking passage from the charnel-house to the open air is to awaken from a fearsome dream. It was a memorable relief to see once more the sun on the plat of grass, to stand erect and breathe, and to hear at the foot of the rocks the reassuring sound of the sea.

XLV.

THE WHITE HOUSE.

THE walled capital of Puerto Rico will be for ever associated with the life and times of that most romantic adventurer, Juan Ponce de Leon. This picturesque Castilian was a soldier of fortune, who had already served in many campaigns before he embarked with Columbus on his second voyage in 1493.

Ponce de Leon in due course settled in the turbulent, murder-ridden island of Española, where he became lieutenant to the governor, and where he perfected himself in the arts of Indian warfare. As a hunter and slayer of Indians he acquired imperishable fame. In 1508 he went with an armed force to Puerto Rico, found the island peopled by the gentle Arawaks, and proceeded, in the Spanish fashion, to wipe them off the face of the earth. They died very hard; but left no traces of themselves except in records of native risings, of Spanish houses in flames, and of white men stumbled upon in woods, dead and mutilated. In 1509 Ponce de Leon was appointed Governor of Puerto Rico, where, two years later, he founded the city of San Juan Bautista. Here he lived in the Casa Blanca, the White House, which he built for himself by the margin of the harbour.

Time was beginning to tell upon the intrepid soldier. Three years of alert fighting in a treacherous country had sapped his vigour; three years of the tropics had damped that fiery and disdainful spirit which had made him a leader of men. Although he had but reached the age of fifty-two he was already an old man. He who had been the imperious ruler was losing his grip upon the neck of affairs. He who had feared nothing was now haunted by a hundred dreads. The man whose voice had been the voice of

a god, had come to be mocked by underlings, and defied by creatures he had lifted from the dust. Like the lion who was once king of the forest, but who had become aged and toothless, he could now only stand with his back against a rock and snarl at those who essayed to snap at him.

If there could return once more the strength and daring of bygone days! If it were but possible to feel again in his veins the stirring pulse of youth! What a dream would that be to gloat over, whenever he had turned from the council chamber thwarted, and sore at heart!

As he fretted within the walls of Casa Blanca, pondering these things, he heard some story of an island where was a spring of water, of which all who drank had restored to them the dash and vigour of youth. Here then it seemed was the substance of his longing. At all hazards he would search the world for this fountain of life and find it. The very thought filled his mind with warm fancies and extravagant imaginings. He learned that the spring was in an island called Bimini, away to the north. With the haste of one whose days are few, he fitted out three ships and sailed from Puerto Rico on March 3, 1512, taking his departure from San German on the west of the island.

Now Bimini was to be found—so the soothsayer affirmed—among the Bahamas. It was an unlikely spot for the Fountain of Youth, inasmuch as the Bahamas are a prosaic group of sandstone islets and rocks, poor of soil and but thinly wooded. Some are indeed mere wastes of scrub, given over to sea birds and turtles. They are dangerous of approach, which was a good omen in the eyes of the pursuer of youth, for it may be supposed that Bimini the precious would be guarded by dragons in the form of coral reefs and death-scattering shoals.

Had Ponce de Leon possessed the advantage of consulting the Admiralty "West India Pilot" he would have found it reported (in volume ii.) that among the Bahamas "good water is rather scarce." According to the same authority the Bimini Islands, two in number, are mean and sandy, being "covered with small wood to the height of about forty feet." On the north island "is

a small settlement and a resident magistrate; and vessels in distress may obtain water and supplies sufficient for the moment." It is not stated that the water has any medicinal or magic properties.

In the course of his search the expectant Juan incidentally discovered Florida. He called it Florida, it would seem, because his mind was full of thoughts of the budding flowers that grace the boy and girl time of the year.

He landed at every island or cay he came upon, and as they number some hundreds in this region he was well engaged. He drank of every spring, pool or puddle that the islands could muster. During the course of his experiments on this spa-hunting quest he must have drunk brackish water, dirty water as well as water that made him sick.

Still there was hope in every draught. He would fill his cup at the last discovered spring, would gaze at it with the expectancy of a toper reviewing a precious wine, would gulp it down, and then, drawing himself erect and squaring his shoulders, would wait for that glow in the veins and that tightening of the muscles which would tell that he had reached the fountain that made all men young. Lack of information as to the therapeutics of the desired beverage would involve some uncertainty as to how long it would take for the dose to act. The miracle might work when he was deep in sleep! Filled with this hope he would spring from his couch in the morning and rush to the mirror, hoping to find reflected there the ruddy cheeks of a lad with down upon his lips, and a merry gleam in his eyes. Alas! he met instead with the old, familiar, shrunken visage, the lined brow, the wearied eyes, the grey tuft of scanty beard.

Every native that the adventurer encountered was questioned as to the Fountain of Life, although he might as well have been interrogated as to the Binomial Theorem. Every man with whom the Castilian could obtain speech was pressed by the ever repeated, piteous demand, "Tell me the way to Bimini." It was like a child at Christmas time, wandering about with an empty stocking and asking everyone if he had met Santa Claus.

On one small island, on a certain day in his journeying, he found an aged Indian woman. She was the sole human being on the desolate spot. It is probable that she had been left there to die, or had been turned adrift in a canoe without paddles, and had found herself cast upon this particular shore. It may not be too much to suppose that she was the scold and virago of her native village, an old harridan of whose tongue everybody went in dread, yet whom no one dared to murder outright. Perhaps she was carried off one night with her head in a bag, squealing, scratching, and fire-spitting, to be dropped into a canoe when the tide was running strong.

The stately Ponce de Leon asked her, of course, if she knew Bimini and the Spring of Eternal Youth. She replied, with the readiness of Sapphira, that she knew both the island and the fountain well. She was probably not called upon to explain why she herself had not drunk of its water, or why, if she had so drunk, the result was so exceedingly discouraging. She was rowed off to the ship as a pearl of great price, to become her saviour's guide, philosopher and friend.

So the two started off together on the great quest, a curious couple in very truth, the spotless knight, the Sir Galahad of the West, and this toothless, unsavoury old beldame, who jabbered and chattered all day long, and who was constantly dragged out of the hold (where she had been put for peace) to see if this island or that was the real Isle of the Blessed. How the deluded soldier would scan her wrinkled face each time as she looked shoreward; how he would gaze into her cunning eyes for the light of recognition; with what impatience would he wait for the first words that dropped from her mumbling lips!

Ponce de Leon and the dirty old woman travelled together for many months, but no fountain was come upon. She became more jovial and less bony, while he only felt himself weighed down more heavily by age as each day passed. After much travail he returned to Puerto Rico and to the Casa Blanca with its restful garden. His faith in the ancient crone, who had been so long his shipmate, never faltered. So deep was he under her spell

that he sent her off again upon the high seas with his captain, Juan Perez, to continue the search for this precious fountain which all the time was running recklessly to waste.

The grimy old lady must have become quite a mariner, quite an authority on the Bahamas, as well as a finished expert in the art of lying. After many months of absence, Juan Perez dropped his anchor one day in the harbour over against the White House, and, rowing ashore, came to tell his master, with downcast face and hat in hand, that the quest had failed. What became of that ancient mariner, the lady pilot, is not known. I expect that Juan Perez, maddened by her babble and sick of her story-telling, dropped her once more into a canoe without paddles and reported her—on his return—as having flown away upon a witch's broom-stick.

As to Ponce de Leon, his vanity and restlessness, together with the flattery of his friends, brought him to his end. After some leisured years he felt that he must needs display once more to the admiring world his long latent talents as a fighter of Indians. So with nothing less than a fleet from Spain he proceeded to rid the islands and the adjacent seas of the obnoxious native. He commenced his operations at Guadaloupe, was received not by gentle Arawaks but by a teeth-gnashing company of lusty Caribs, who, without more ado, ambushed and killed most of his men.

The great Indian fighter had failed. He was beaten in his very first essay by a pack of naked cannibals; so, sick at heart, he returned ingloriously once more to the Casa Blanca. Here he was content to stay and build castles in the air, and strut the part of governor, a peevish, testy, conceited old man, whom folk were disposed to humour compassionately.

In 1521—by which time he was sixty-one and a tiresome old dodderer—he must needs go forth to conquer Florida, and by this exploit eclipse the deeds of Cortes and Pizarro. He made a landing on the coast, with fine bluster and ceremony no doubt, but was driven back to his boats by the Indians, who in the process wounded the crazy old soldier in the thigh. This little

rebuff, involving, as it did, much puffing and panting, left him resolved to go home again and resume his gardening. He had had in one day enough of empire-making, being, moreover, fully satisfied that Pizarro was not a man he was disposed to flatter by further imitation.

Poor soul! his ship reached only so far as Cuba, where he was carried ashore and where he died.

The visitor to San Juan will readily find the Casa Blanca. It stands on a bluff overlooking the harbour, a great white, rambling house, which is still a place of authority, for it is the Headquarters of the United States Army. Of the white house that Ponce de Leon knew and loved, it is safe to say that no stone exists. But the garden is there with its picturesque slopes, its nodding palms, and its glorious outlook across the shining lagoon. Well might the man who dallied in this pleasance sigh for eternal youth, so that the enchanting scene should never fade, or become out of tune or unappreciated.

Surrounding the garden is a most noticeable wall, white from end to end, very ancient and very curiously crenellated. It has about it so wizen a look, that one is tempted to believe that it was built by him who sought the Fountain of Youth, and that a memory of this very garden, with its white wall, survived the medley of arms and men that crowded upon his brain as he lay dying in Cuba.

XLVI.

MONA THE PROTESTANT.

ON the way from San Juan de Puerto Rico to San Domingo the steamer passes close to Mona Island. This remarkable piece of land appears to have planted itself in these seas as a protest against the luxury, the extravagance, and the general profligacy of the whole gathering of West Indian Islands. These islands are characterised—as none can gainsay—by a recklessness of outline, by a lavish display of hills and peaks, by frivolous capes and coves, and by a meretricious flaunting of garish colours.

Mona the Protestant stands alone among this giddy company, a St. John crying in the wilderness. Solemn and austere, it would claim to be, in a careless land, a pattern of righteousness. Its surface is an absolutely dead, monotonous, self-mortifying level. Nothing so gay even as a hillock disturbs its surface. No suspicion of green, no trace of colour, defiles its sanctimonious outline. From point to point it is one relentless monastic grey. As a rebuke to such furbelows as creeks and promontories, its chaste circuit is marked by an undeviating, sour cliff, as numb as a prison wall.

This sea-girt recluse appears, indeed, to have stripped itself of every possible feature that could make an island joyous. Viewed from a distance it looks like a slab of dull paving stone resting on the ocean. As even the severest ascetic has probably some hidden weaknesses, so Mona is said to present certain pits and holes on its solemn surface, where are surreptitious scrub and even patches of grass. It nourishes in its shrunken bosom, moreover, goats, hogs, and tortoises, and has so far yielded to the temptations of the mercenary world as to harbour a German

company who dig foul-smelling guano within its melancholy confines.

It boasts also of a tortured rock which is in a state of eternal penance, for it is balanced on the brink of a precipice where it appears to be ever on the point of toppling over. This purgatorial stone is called "Caigo-o-no-caigo" ("Shall I fall or not?") Across the Mona passage, to which this island gives its name, stands Haiti, to the chief city of which—San Domingo—the steamer is bound.

XLVII.

THE ISLAND OF MISRULE.

THE island of Haiti, or Española, was discovered by Columbus, during his first voyage, on December 6, 1492. He was fascinated with it from the moment he came in sight of its shores. He found the climate to be like May in Cordova, and the hills and valleys to rival in loveliness those of Castile, so he called the island Española. It was destined to be associated in his career with little more than disappointment and misfortune.

He made the north coast of the island, and on Christmas Eve sailed into Acul Bay. Near here his own ship, the famous *Santa Maria*, went haplessly ashore and became a total wreck. Somewhere under the sands about this bay are still lying the brown keel and bilge timbers of this great three-masted galleon of 100 tons in which the discovery of the New World was made.

Among the crew of the *Santa Maria* were an Englishman named Tallarte, or Allard, and an Irishman who is entered on the ship's books as William of Galway. How these two adventurous mariners came to find themselves at Palos, whence the expedition sailed, is unknown. They probably enlisted for the venture as a means of escaping the rigours of a Spanish gaol. Anyhow Columbus when he returned home the first time left Allard and William behind on Haiti with forty others. They were enjoined to collect gold and to form a colony at a spot named La Navidad, where a fort had been already built. This was in January 1493.

Now Columbus did not return to Española until November 1493, and in the meanwhile no tidings had reached him of this first city of his founding. He approached La Navidad on his

THE CASTLE OF HOMENAJE, SAN DOMINGO.

second coming with the most eager interest. So impatient was he that he sent a boat ashore with an exploring party as soon as he came in touch with the coast. On the sands of a lonely river, fringed no doubt by the green sea grape, the party landed. The first noticeable things they happened upon were two dead bodies, one with a rope round its neck and the other with a rope round its feet. They were two of the crew of the *Santa Maria.* In such wise was the admiral welcomed to his new possessions in the earthly paradise.

Columbus hurried on to La Navidad and reached the haven at nightfall. There was no light to be seen on the shore. He fired off two guns, expecting still a joyous response from the beach, a *feu de joie* from the fort, bonfires, Spanish cheers, and a crowd of beaming men in hurriedly paddled canoes, tearing across the bay. No answer came. La Navidad was silent.

He landed at daybreak with vehement anxiety. No boat could be seen in the harbour. There was not a soul on the beach. As he jumped ashore the land crabs scuttled away to their holes. He made for the fort. It was deserted and in ashes, while among the cinders, as he kicked them to and fro, were bleached bones and fragments of clothing. In some native huts in the thicket he found a Moorish mantle, an anchor, and a dead man's head wrapped up in a basket.

The truth came out at last. La Navidad had ceased to be. Every one of the company of forty-two was dead, including Allard of England and William of Galway. The colonists, as soon as the admiral's ship was out of sight, had abandoned themselves to every kind of excess. The robbing of the Indians and the seizing of their wives and daughters became favourite pastimes. Murder followed incidentally. Some of the settlers died of their debaucheries; others succumbed to disease; while those who remained were butchered by the infuriated natives.

Thus the attempt to fill the coffers of Spain with gold, to found a city, and to diffuse the blessings of civilisation among a godless and benighted people came to piteous failure. At La Navidad were reaped the first fruits of Spain's "glorious

conquest and discovery." The most that could be claimed in the matter of glory was that six poor heathens, taken to Spain by Columbus on his first leaving Española, had been received, through baptism, into the Holy Faith, and had so secured "the safety of their souls."

Columbus the dreamer—quite undismayed by the disaster at La Navidad—sailed eastwards along the coast, and established another city, which he called Ysabel after that lady with the rare blue eyes, her Most Catholic Majesty the Queen of Castile. This was in December 1493. The city was to become one of the marvels of the world. It was to outshine all the glories of Cathay. It was to dominate a country more favoured than the golden Chersonese, more full of riches than the plains of Ophir; for this was the veritable land of Havilah, of which it had been truly said "and the gold of that land is good."

The city of Ysabel never rose beyond a poor patch of mud and wattle huts, with perhaps a stone fort and a pretence at a quay. The hidalgo who had sailed with Columbus as a conqueror of strange lands and a founder of cities, was pictured by his friends in Seville as strutting along a causeway in Ysabel, paved with gold, attended by cringing Indians who carried before him baskets full of precious stones and incredible spices. In reality the famished aristocrat, sick with fever, was probably sitting on a box full of rotten stores, his silk doublet in rags, his hose in holes, his feet well nigh shoeless. He was pricking patterns with his sword in the fetid mud which made up the only street of the City of Despair, wondering if there was any slum in Spain so pitiable and so comfortless.

Ysabel, the long forgotten, is now buried beneath the jungle. "Nothing remains to point out its exact locality but the ruins of a single pillar almost hid among the bushes near the beach."[1]

Finally Columbus, hearing of gold in the south of the island, established the town of San Domingo at the mouth of the Ozama River. The town flourished, waxing rich and very famous, and exists to this day as the chief city of the island.

[1] *West India Pilot*, vol. ii. page 271 : London, 1899.

Spanish rule in the beautiful island of Española was terrible beyond all thinking. The whole native population was exterminated, as has been already detailed (page 171). "If there be any powers of hell, they stalked at large through the forests and valleys of Española. Lust and bloody cruelty, of a kind not merely indescribable but unrealisable by sane men and women, drenched the once happy island with anguish and terror. And in payment for it the Spaniards undertook to teach the heathen the Christian religion. . . . In the twelve years since the discovery of Columbus, between half a million and a million natives perished; and as the Spanish colonisation spread afterwards from island to island, and the banner of civilisation and Christianity was borne farther abroad throughout the Indies, the same hideous process was continued. In Cuba, in Jamaica, throughout the Antilles, the cross and the sword, the whip-lash and the Gospel, advanced together; wherever the Host was consecrated, hideous cries of agony and suffering broke forth; until happily, in the fulness of time, the dire business was complete, and the whole of the people who had inhabited this garden of the world were exterminated, and their blood and race wiped from the face of the earth."[1]

In 1505 negro slaves were introduced into Española. It was a memorable occasion; the squalid beginning of a terrible end. The event itself was nothing more than the landing of a company of black men and women on the beach. They could hardly crawl out of the boats, so crippled were they from having been cramped for weeks in a putrid hold. Their very bodies were indented with the marks of the planks. Huddled together like frightened animals, they cowered on the sands, muttering miserably as they whisked the flies from the sores left by the last slash of the whip. Some would happily be dying; all would be famished for want of food; all wide-eyed with wonder and alarm.

In this poor fashion there rose upon the horizon of Española a small black cloud, no larger than a man's hand. It was a cloud that grew ever wider, rounder and darker, a cloud in whose hollows

[1] *Christopher Columbus*, by Filson Young, vol. ii. pages 230 and 233: London, 1906.

was the rumble of thunder. It grew, until at last it covered the bright island and buried it in night.

By the time of the French Revolution there were some 500,000 black slaves in Haiti. By this period, as the outcome of exuberant bloodshed, the west part of the island (that now known as Haiti) had passed into the hands of France, while Spain held still the eastern portion—the present territory of Santo Domingo. With the Revolution slavery was abolished, and in 1794 the National Assembly of France—with little knowledge of what they were doing—proclaimed the equality of all citizens in the island, irrespective of colour. Then the great thunder cloud burst, and there began a war between the blacks and the whites which for ferocity and diabolical viciousness remains without an equal in the world's history.

The blacks had centuries of cruelty and oppression to wipe out, since the day when the first boat-load of negroes had landed. No quarter was thought of on either side. Villages and crops were committed to the flames. Captives were burned alive. Wholesale massacre was the order of the day. If the negroes were guilty of hideous atrocities on white women, the French, on their part, hunted fugitives with Cuban bloodhounds and spared neither the aged nor the children.

The blacks were led by the famous Toussaint Breda, by him who was known as "L'ouverture"—the way of escape. It was through him, as through a bright portal, that the oppressed hoped to gain freedom and peace. He had been first a slave, then a coachman, and finally the general of the revolutionary forces. A fearless as well as a brilliant man, he was finally captured by treachery and died in a dungeon in France.

After him came the demon Dessalines, who, when he had cleared the island of the French, caused himself to be crowned as Emperor of Haiti under the title of Jacques I. His reign, marked as it was by extraordinary debaucheries, was very short; for after he had been two years upon the throne he was happily assassinated. This was in 1806.

The blacks in their war with the French had, however, on their

side a more powerful ally than either Toussaint or Dessalines. The Yellow Death fought on the side of the slave, for it is estimated that no less than 26,000 of the French army perished of the fever.

To Dessalines succeeded Christophe, one of the most ludicrous figures in modern history. He was a mulatto slave who took upon himself the title of Henri I. He created a copious black aristocracy, whereby the waterside porter became a duke, and the footman a marquis. He drew up a code of laws, the Code Henri, in imitation of the Code Napoléon. His court was as gorgeous as the court in an *opéra bouffe*. More than that, he built the palace of Sans Souci, an unbelievable edifice worthy of the "Arabian Nights." The ruins of this fantastic edifice still crown certain gracious heights near Cap Haytien. Henri I. did one wise thing: he shot himself after a burlesque reign of some thirteen years.

The subsequent history of the island is concerned largely with disorder and violence, with revolutions, pillage and bankruptcy, with the pulling down of one ruler or the suicide of another.

Española is now divided into the Black Republic of Haiti and the Mulatto Republic of Santo Domingo. Of the former Froude gives this account in his work on "The English in the West Indies." "They speak French still; they are nominally Catholics still; and the tags and rags of the gold lace of French civilisation continue to cling about their institutions. But in the heart of them has revived the old idolatry of the Gold Coast, and in the villages of the interior, where they are out of sight and can follow their instincts, they sacrifice children in the serpent's honour after the manner of their forefathers."

XLVIII.

A CITY OUT AT ELBOWS.

THE city of San Domingo lies on the south side of Española, the same being a gracious-looking island, mountainous and green. The city stands upon a mud-coloured cliff at the mouth of a small river. The ship anchors at a cautious distance, and as she rolls to the great "swell and scend of the sea" which is met with in the bay it is possible to take a view of the oldest existing settlement in the New World, of "the brave city of San Domingo," which was founded by Columbus 410 years ago.

Every foot of ground in and about the capital has some memorable interest. There on the right, for instance, the river comes forth to the sea by way of a ravine like that at the mouth of the Dart in Devonshire. On the shore of that stream Hawkins in 1562 bartered slaves for gold dust and spices—a notable piece of business, for it was the first traffic of the English in West Indian waters. A certain object on that river bank caught the eye of Francisco de Bobadilla, when he came from Europe to inquire into the alleged misconduct of Columbus. The object was a gibbet, from which the bodies of several Spaniards were hanging, and was to him a sign that Spain was making progress. Away to the west, where the cliff is low, is the beach upon which Drake landed his men when he made his famous assault on the city.

It was about "the time of lauds," as the Spaniards would have said, that we anchored off the capital. The eastern sun fell full upon the town, lighting up the great wall of defence that crowns the southern cliff and encloses the city all the way round by the

north. At one spot, where there was a gap in the wall, it was possible to look down a straight street, to see the long shadows thrown across the road, and the just-awakened townfolk moving dully about.

Within the city wall is a medley of buildings and huts, of palm trees and banana fans, of house-fronts that look like squares of white or yellow cardboard, with here and there a black buttress or a frayed parapet. Above the heap of roofs there rise into the sun magnificent domes of brown masonry, cupolas, a lofty gable in grey that may belong to a palace, the tower of a church, the dense green of trees.

Those who would land at San Domingo must row ashore in small boats, and make for a quay some little way up the river. This river entry to the town is most romantic and picturesque. On the headland, at the very mouth, is an ancient castle with heavy outworks, which would seem to be built of blood-coloured stones. This is the castle of Homenaje, a fortress with which Drake had dealings. It was probably built at the same time as the city walls, viz. in 1509. It is a wizened, rascally-looking, old place, whose seaward defences are as jagged as the cliff they spring from. Capping the stronghold is a great square tower, almost windowless, but brave with battlements of a very defiant type. It has at one angle a staircase tower, while below is a paved platform heavily embrasured—just such a one as might have been visited by the ghost that Hamlet saw. Creepers and green bushes are scaling the outworks from the sea-front, and seem likely, in course of years, to take the aged donjon by gentle assault.

The river bank beyond the castle is steep with cliff and wall. By the water's edge is a contented stretch of plantains and low trees. On the summit of the wall are ancient houses. Some have balconies that overhang the stream; others boast of turrets, fragments of terraces, water-gates where grandees once lingered, but which are now mere portals for filth.

The wall that defied Drake and so many other marauders still encircles the city. It is not less than eight feet thick in places, is

of imposing height, and is strengthened by bastions at intervals. There are still on the western front the gates through which the British entered when they seized the city in 1585. Ruin more or less disastrous has befallen the wall along its whole traverse, although its scars and seams are hidden by trailing green. Now is it put to various base uses, being convenient to throw rubbish over, to shelter midden heaps, as well as form a backing for a horde of parasitic hovels and evil-smelling sheds.

The entrance to the city is through the River Gate, a noble structure of stone, with classic pillars on either side of it, well daubed with the red and green programmes of music halls.

The town itself affords a spectacle of bygone magnificence and present squalor. The pride of San Domingo, once "the city of glorious fame," has fallen into sordid depths. Its superb buildings are left to crumble and decay. It has no past to revere, no prestige to maintain. It has indeed exchanged "old lamps for new," the carved stone city of mediæval Spain for the stuccoed town of the tawdry builder.

The main streets of San Domingo smell; the small streets stink. Rubbish is thrown into the road and left there to ferment and stew in the sun. The chief thoroughfare in the city is a way of ruts, pits, and trenches, having a bed not unlike that of a mountain torrent. Electric wires are slung along it on rough, unsteady poles straight from the backwoods, while a few dangling strands here and there seem to cause no uneasiness. In places on the side paths are fragments of pavement, with intervals of well-trampled mud, inlaid with castaway paper and banana skins. The number of gambling rooms and of brazen-faced taverns along the way give the High Street an air of unembarrassed dissipation which would have pleased the early buccaneer.

The folk in the street are, for the most part, mulattoes, with an admixture of pure negroes, and of white men of doubtful whiteness. They are, on the whole, a picturesque people, not always of pleasing countenance, it is true, but with a certain theatrical air about them which is encouraged by the broad-

SAN DOMINGO—THE RIVER FRONT.

brimmed sombrero, by silk sashes worn as belts, by dark eyes and wild black hair. The least attractive of the men are represented by certain black soldiers in butcher-blue blouses. They slouch about the streets with lethargic insolence, and serve to demonstrate to what depths even loafing may sink when the loafer is degenerate.

There are many old and stately houses of stone in the place, with fine balconies, heavily barred windows, and massive doors. Many more, however, are new and braggart buildings of surpassing vulgarity. Here is a gracious fabric with windows and gateways of delicately sculptured stone. It may have been a convent or a university. It is now a lumber store, and its sensitive carved work is daubed over with barbarian whitewash. An alley leads into a paved courtyard where must have stalked in old days some arrogant Castilian; but it is choked with rubbish, its many-pillared arcade is in ruins and its walls green with weeds. Balustrades of noble iron-work are crumbling into rust; huge doors, which might have been battered upon by Drake's seamen, are falling off their hinges; the dainty *patio* has become a place for the drying of clothes.

There are some most picturesque churches still standing in this tragic city. Conspicuous among them is the rare church of Santa Barbara with its domed roof, its ancient windows, its curious tower of a long-forgotten fashion, and its sorry evidences of past magnificence. To the north of the city are the superb ruins of the San Francisco monastery, the walls of which are almost buried in green. Bushes and weeds fill the roofless aisles, but the main gateway, with its lofty arch and columns, is as perfect as it was centuries ago.

Still, in spite of it all, San Domingo remains one of the most fascinating and most inspiring cities in these waters. It is perhaps none the worse for being out at elbows or for proclaiming in its streets the last scenes of the "Rake's Progress." To walk through its highways and its alleys is to turn over the pages of an old missal illumined with faded gilt and precious colours, the incense-perfumed leaves of which are patched with shreds of gutter

journals and interbound with gaudy prints, ballad sheets, and play bills.

Near the River Gate is a sturdy ruin made up of two square towers joined by a central block. The whole structure is black and roofless. It has ample windows, and retains, in spite of the squalor which surrounds it, great dignity and assertiveness, for it was once "a magnifical and prince-lyke house." It is called the Almirante, and is claimed to be the castle which Columbus built, and in which he was confined when a prisoner and in chains.

XLIX.

THE TOMB OF COLUMBUS.

FROM near the Water Gate the main street of San Domingo slouches along to the Cathedral Square. This is an unkempt space laid out, in a half-hearted manner, as a public garden. It affords thereby a withered lounging place for languid and untidy idlers. Being graced by a theatrical statue of Columbus it takes to itself the name of the Parque Colon.

On one side of it is the cathedral, a dignified and solid structure built by the men who planted the banner of Castile upon the shores of the New World. It stands in this tawdry, meretricious park an august memorial of the adventurous spirit of old Spain. Its weather-stained walls are venerable enough, for its foundations were laid in 1514 and the last stone put in place twenty-six years later. Its roof is held up by noble pillars, while so vast is the fabric that in the recesses of its many chapels there hangs for ever the gloom of a tropic forest.

In the roof there is said to be embedded a cannon-ball fired from one of Drake's ships. Drake's ordnance is hugely flattered by this legend. The ball—if such be there—is more probably one that was dropped into the square by the English in 1809, when they were attempting to wrest the city from the possession of the French.

There leans against the wall in a side chapel a great, gaunt cross, nine feet high, made roughly of native wood. It might well have been fashioned by the axe of a devout pioneer, so simple is it. Cut in archaic figures on its front is the date MDXIV. This is said to be the identical cross set up to mark the site on which the cathedral was to be built. If this be true, it has stood

within the shelter of these solemn walls for well-nigh 400 years. It has witnessed the shaking of those walls by more than one deathly earthquake. It has seen the great doors battered down by pirates, and the yelling horde pour into the solemn gloom with clatter of arms. It has witnessed the scurrying away of panting priests, the tearing down of images, the wolf-like scrambling over altar-plate. It may well be that some bare-legged ruffian, with a cutlass in his hand and a bloody cloth round his skull, has been brought to a stand before this austere emblem, and in making his obeisance has let drop at its foot the spoil he carried.

On more than one dark night, too, the shadow of the cross has been cast on the wall by a gleam that flickered through the stained-glass windows—the red glare of the burning city.

Beneath an overpowering modern monument of white marble, which reaches upwards out of sight and is brave with lions, shields, and mediæval figures, is a bronze urn in which are deposited the remains of Christopher Columbus. The inscription on the casket runs thus:

"A Cristobal Colon: descobridor de America."

It is no profit to discuss here the authenticity of these relics. The great explorer died at Valladolid in 1506 and was buried there. Later his body was removed to the monastery of Las Cuevas at Seville. Thence his bones—after a rest of thirty years—started again on a voyage to the West Indies, to the Española of his troubles, and to this very church. Their subsequent journeyings matter little, nor is it worth while to follow the juggling and shuffling to which the weary remains of Christopher and his brother Diego have been subjected in recent times.

If he rests beneath this incense-mellowed roof, within sound of the sea and on the shore of that New World of his whose winter was "as May in Cordova," then his resting-place is fitting.

CATHEDRAL, SAN DOMINGO.
Showing the Tomb of Columbus.

L.

DRAKE AT SAN DOMINGO.

Of all ventures to the Indies ever essayed by Drake, none was so adventurous nor so dashing as the hazard of 1585.

In the autumn of the previous year the great privateersman set sail from England with a squadron of twenty-five ships. It was the largest fleet that had ever crossed the Atlantic. Drake held no commission; he launched forth upon the high seas without orders or authority. With him went 2300 men, men after his own heart, each as eager as a hawk. None of the crew received any pay. They were volunteers, every man of them, from the captain to the deck hand. Mariners from all parts had trudged to Plymouth with their bundles on their backs, and had sought out the shipping yard to enlist for the venture. Three visions were ablaze in their brains as they waited their turn at the ship-husband's door—the getting of loot, the killing of Spaniards, the joys of pirating. To not a few there was a fourth reason for volunteering—the glory of serving under the ever-victorious Drake.

Many young bloods and courtly gentlemen, in quilted doublets and silk hose, with ribbon knots on their shoulders, joined the expedition. The general of the land forces was Christopher Carleil. Drake sailed in the *Elizabeth Bonadventure*. Francis Knolles, the Queen's cousin, was in the *Leicester*, while the captain of the *Primrose* was Martin Frobisher, he of the North-west Passage, a tough old sailorman now fifty years of age.

The fleet was away on the voyage nearly twelve months, for they reached Portsmouth safely in July 1585, "to the great glory of God." The voyage had been "rich and gainfull." The total

plunder taken amounted to 60,000*l.*; of this amount 40,000*l.* went to the "adventurers," to the stay-at-home folk who had provided the money, while the rest was divided among the officers and crew.

Drake, having cleared the Channel, turned south and put in at Vigo, to the terror of the inhabitants, and to the dumbfounded indignation of Spain. England and Spain were not at war at the time; Drake had no excuse for making a hostile entry into a Spanish port; yet he sailed his ships in quietly, anchored at his leisure, and looked around to see what damage he could do.

To the Court of Spain this was an act of inconceivable insolence. That these wretched islanders should dare to insult the sacred soil of Spain was a thing beyond believing. Spain was the mistress of the sea; Spain owned half of the known world; while these uncouth seamen hailed from paltry England, from a state which owned its very existence to the forbearance of Philip. The impertinence of Francis Drake staggered Europe. As well might a street urchin have tugged with mudded hands at the robe of an archbishop, as his Grace stalked by in solemn procession. Froude says that the Council of State sat for three days aghast, staring at one another as if paralysed by the enormity of the affront.

Drake, quite unconscious of the stir he was making, "held up" all the boats he found in Vigo Sound. The majority contained only country produce, useful to the ship's purser, but of no noticeable value. One craft, however, was come across "laden with the principal church stuff of the High Church of Vigo, where also was their great cross of silver, of very fair embossed work and double-gilt all over, having cost them a great mass of money."[1] This boat Drake took.

The town, of course, was in a panic. The citizens were fleeing to the country as fast as their heels and mules could take them. The distracted governor, shaking with alarm, sent as a peace offering to the English admiral a boat-load of wine, oil, apples and marmalade. This present Drake was graciously pleased to accept,

[1] Account by Thomas Cates. Hakluyt Society.

although he probably pronounced the apples very inferior to those of Devon.

The governor next ventured to beg a parley. The condescending Englishman granted it, but, as he had no confidence in Spanish officials, suggested that they should meet in the centre of the harbour, each in his own skiff. The governor—a small, fat man, I expect—was rowed off in his best uniform, very white in the face no doubt, his lips dry, and his gloved hands clutching at the gunwale of the wherry. Drake appears to have been brief but very cheery, adopting some such tone as this—"So glad to have seen Vigo harbour! Nice day for the water! Thanks, he had got all he wanted. He would not trouble his Excellency further. Good morning!" More than one eager watcher, including those who, with bags of money stuffed up their backs, were peeping out of cellar doors, must have exclaimed "Thank God!" as the British vanished from the estuary.

After various adventures Drake found himself, on the last day of the year, off "the brave city of San Domingo," "the famous and goodly-builded city." He anchored over against the town, somewhere about the spot where the present-day steamer finds a berth. He would see before him a city built of stone, "as gorgeous as Seville or Cadiz," and not very greatly altered from the sea-town which meets the eye of the traveller of to-day. He would look upon the same castle at the river's mouth, the same great wall and bastions about the precincts, the same cathedral dome and monastery towers. If Drake came to San Domingo now he would miss the public gallows on the headland, it is true, and would notice that an iron lighthouse and a three-storied American brewery were new since he last dropped anchor in the roadstead.

Drake made pretence to land a force at the town. What he actually did, however, was to send off 1000 men, about the dead of night, in boats with muffled oars. They were to row ten miles westward down the coast, land, and make a forced march back to the city as the day dawned. The next morning was New Year's Day. The empty boats having returned to the anchorage,

Drake made fussy preparations to land an imaginary army, looking at the same time eagerly to the west to seek for signs of the advancing column which was under the command of Carleily.

The deluded Spaniards crowded to the sea-walls. At last, about noon, a horseman could be seen galloping for the west gate of the town. He was bringing the news. He was followed in time by a straggling company of peasants running for the shelter of the ramparts. The English were advancing beyond a doubt. The alarm spread in the city. Men left the walls. A troop of 150 horsemen were seen to dash out of the San Lazaro gate to meet the pirates. Their breast-plates glistened in the sun, while the jingle of their arms could be heard from the ships' decks as they vanished into the jungle. They were a picked company, the nobility of San Domingo, since every man in the squadron was a hidalgo of some degree.

Soon the sound of firing was to be heard among the trees. From the commotion it was evident that the English were advancing in two columns, each making for one of the gates. The watchers next saw a whole rabble in flight, pressing for the city, followed by scattered horsemen, who had been routed and turned back. At last across the clearing between the jungle and the wall came the British storming party, rushing forward at the double. As they crossed the open the crews of the ships raised a yell which must have sounded in the city like the baying of a pack of hounds.

Cannon shots were fired from the curtain and the bastions. The hidalgos tried to re-form at the gates, but only for a moment. They could face small shot, but they could not face the bristling line of pikes gripped by these savage, panting men, who came on like a breaking sea. The two gates were rushed, and the town became suddenly full of noise, of sounds of men shouting, of guns firing, of alarm bells hurriedly tolled.

Those on the ships would have a view perhaps down a sunlit street, wherein they could see frantic women at the upper windows and the men below barricading doors. There would be a nervous crowd at the cross-way, all looking westwards, their hands on one

another's shoulders. Suddenly something would come into their view, so that they scattered precipitately with a yell, "The pirates are coming!" The women slammed to the shutters, and the place was still. In another moment, across the deserted street end, a company of English pikemen tore by, like a tornado, and after they had passed heads came again out of windows and scared folk out of dark entries.

Drake, standing on the poop of the *Bonadventure*, must have felt for a time that the issue was uncertain. The English were making for the cathedral close—"a very fair, spacious square," as they afterwards spoke of it. It is the place now occupied by the unornamental garden.

The firing was ceasing; the town was becoming quiet. What had happened? Had Carleil's men fallen into a trap? To those who hung over the bulwarks of the ships, or who had climbed the rigging for a better view, the suspense became beyond endurance. Fists were clenched; men muttered in whispers; Drake stalked to and fro as restless as a caged lion. On a moment, from the flagstaff of a tower, there broke into the blue above the city the banner of St. George of England. The lads of Devon had won!

The attacking party were a little too small to make themselves at once masters of the entire city. So they entrenched themselves in the square, erected barricades, and arranged for a bivouac. It may be supposed that they looted provisions from the houses around, for Drake reports that they "found good store for their relief" in the city. A fire would be made in the square out of window shutters and other handy fuel, while with a few chairs and tables removed from convenient parlours near by the pirates would be able to enjoy a welcome meal.

When night fell the camp fire would light up a hundred beaming faces and would throw strange shadows across the illumined façade of the cathedral. Any bold citizen who peeped into the square, about the hour of compline, might have thought that this flame-coloured horde had come straight from the Bottomless Pit.

The invaders, however, were not in a mood for sleep. Indeed about midnight "they made themselves busy about the gates of

the castle," that very castle that stands at the river's mouth. As a result of their battering on the gate, the garrison of the fortress, who had no stomach for night alarms, fled across the stream, and, leaving their boats, ran inland until they were safely hid by the forest.

Drake held the town for four weeks, looting it with great method and precision. The negotiations for a ransom were rather tedious, so Drake expressed his intention of destroying the city piecemeal unless the money was paid. "We spent the early morning," says Thomas Cates, the writer of the chronicle, "in firing the outmost houses; but they being built very magnificently of stone with high lofts gave us no small travail to ruin them." Two hundred men were engaged upon this excellent work. They commenced their labours punctually at daybreak and worked with business-like patience until 9 A.M., when owing to the heat they desisted. Thomas Cates, who evidently took this particular task very much to heart, owns with regret that, in spite of earnest efforts, they were not able to destroy more than one-third of the town up to date.

The Spaniards, perceiving that the disappearance of their beloved city was merely a question of time, proposed to buy the housebreakers out for the sum of 25,000 ducats.[1] These early morning fires, accompanied as they were by the noise of falling roofs and walls, had become so real a nuisance to the quiet-loving citizens that they were prepared to act on the principle of paying a noisome organ-grinder to cease grinding. Drake, after some sneering comment upon the paltriness of the sum, agreed to accept it, and, taking with him the eighty cannon the town possessed, together with other mementoes, sailed away to the south, solaced by the sense of his generous action.

[1] A sum equal probably to 6875*l.*

LI.

THE BUCCANEERS.

ESPAÑOLA will ever be famous as the cradle of the great race of the Buccaneers. They came into being under noticeable circumstances. Spain's first act after the discovery and conquest of the New World was to proclaim her exclusive right to all those territories of which she had any knowledge or even any suspicion. The Pope, "to whose hands the heathen were entrusted by God, to be handed for an inheritance to the highest and most religious bidder,"[1] granted to Spain, in 1493, the possession of all lands lying to the west of a meridian drawn 100 leagues westward of the Azores, and to Portugal all lands lying to the east of that line, the said line to extend to the Arctic and Antarctic poles respectively. At a later date the Brazils were generously left to the latter State.

Spain had, by the time now dealt with, established her rule over the West Indies, as well as over Central and South America, had subdued the mighty empires of Mexico and Peru, and had made settlements along the coasts from California to Chili, and from Florida to the River Plate.

From this not-inconsiderable section of the globe all foreigners were excluded. Every stranger who found his way into the Caribbean Sea was, in the eyes of Spain, a pirate, and was treated as such. Any settler was as unwelcome and as malignant.

Now, coincident with this, reports reached Europe that these excluded lands were very rich and very wonderful. In England, at the same time, there had developed a hatred of Spain—based

[1] *Christopher Columbus*, by Filson Young, vol. i. page 257: London, 1906.

mainly upon points of religion—which was little short of a monomania. The Inquisition fanned that hatred from a glowing ember into a devouring flame. English sailors had been captured, had been put into dungeons as heretics, had been starved and tortured, set to work in the galleys, or burned to death in a fool's cap before a jeering market-place crowd. Privateering became the occupation of honourable, God-fearing gentlemen. To rob, fire, or scuttle a Catholic ship was a commendable work of grace.

In 1588 came the defeat of the Great Armada and the breaking up of the sea power of the arrogant mistress of the world. In defiance of the ban of Spain, a strange company began to collect at the westernmost corner of Española. They came across the seas in obedience to no call; in ones and twos they came, Frenchmen, British, and, Dutch, and, led by some herding instinct, they foregathered at this wild trysting place. Some were mere dare-devil adventurers, others were wily seekers after fortune; the few were in flight from the grip of justice, the many had roamed away from the old sober world in search of freedom.

There was a common tie that banded them together, the call of the wild and the hate of Spain. They formed no colony nor settlement, but simply joined themselves together in a kind of jungle brotherhood. They found a leader as a pack of wolves find theirs, not by choosing one to lead but by following the one who led. Some of the party undertook a little haphazard planting, some became dilettante fishermen. The greater number, however, hunted the cattle with which the island was overrun. The ancestors of these herds had come from Spain, had escaped to the bush, where they had multiplied and grown free. The hunters, or cowboys, traded with the hides they obtained, while they preserved the meat by smoking it upon a buccan, a wooden rack or frame which they found in use by the Caribs. This buccaned meat became an article of commerce, and the traders called themselves buccaneers, or smoked-meat men.

In time, as they grew in numbers, they took to pirating. They manned the long canoes of the natives, and attacked the ship that passed in the night, as well as the galleon that lay

becalmed in the sleepy sun. In this wise they got vessels of their own, arms and men, as well as the wherewithal to become dissipated and rich.

Out of such perfervid beginnings there arose in the Caribbean seas a curious and heterogeneous association of filibusters, who through the whole of the seventeenth century wielded a terrifying power among the West Indian islands, and along the Spanish Main. During many years of that century they proved to be men of amazing enterprise, and of chivalrous valour who were not actuated wholly by sordid motives, nor the mere seeking after loot. To carve their way to greatness through a tangle of violence and robbery, to maintain with never-relaxing tenacity the vendetta against Spain, involved a set purpose as well as a buoyant spirit. It involved, moreover, acts of treachery and deeds of revenge, cruelty enough to poison the good green earth, malice enough to blot out the ever-smiling sun.

Yet at the same time these buccaneers became famous as some of the world's greatest navigators. They developed the art of seamanship; they discovered lands; they added to the science of natural history; they attacked and captured great cities and—most curious of all—did much to establish the staid authority of England in these lawless waters.[1]

That in the end they degenerated into mere rogues and cut-throats may well be supposed. Some, it is true, became honest seamen and colonists, while others settled down among their friends the Darien Indians. The very last of the race slunk about ill-favoured harbours that lay beyond the track of ships. They had scarcely nerve enough left to rob the market boats as they drifted blithely from the plantation to the little port. They could still bluster and brag and curse. They might mock at the gallows when they were flushed with rum, yet would fain rub the mark of Cain off their brows when they were hiding in the mangrove swamp.[2]

[1] Dampier, the great navigator, was a buccaneer as well as a copious writer on natural history. Henry Morgan, the pirate, became deputy governor of Jamaica.

[2] The buccaneers, as a band, were broken up after the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697.

During the period of their greatest prosperity the Buccaneers made their headquarters at Tortuga Island, which lies just off the north-west point of Española. The retreat was protected on the north by inaccessible precipices and on the south by shoals and reefs. On the sheltered side of Tortuga was a deep-water bay within a circle of red cliff. At the foot of the height lay white sands, while on the summit was the tousled jungle. This was the freebooter's home, his pleasure house, his haven of peace. Here on the beach he careened his ships, landed his gold, his altar plate and his spices, filled his water-casks, and mended his gear. Here too, with infinite wrangling and blasphemy, he divided the tub-full of pieces of eight.

The beach would seem too white, too virginal, for such a scene, the sea too delicately blue. Yet here on the sand they squatted in an unholy semicircle, the captain and his crew, some sitting on chests or brandy kegs or leaning across barrels, snapping and growling over the money, like wolves over a carcass.

The captain is enthroned on a stout sea chest. He is an execrable-looking villain, with a bedraggled moustache and dirt-matted hair. His face is so weather-hardened and so tanned that his features may have been carved out of teak. One of his eyes has been gouged from its socket, while the lid of the other is made to droop by reason of a sabre cut which has left a pink streak across his temple. He is dressed in a green satin coat with voluminous skirts; it is buttonless yet shows shreds of lace, while the cuffs have been slit up to allow his hairy arms to burst through. He wears pantaloons of bullock-blood red, canary-coloured stockings and heavy shoes. A couple of pistols stick out of the scarlet sash around his waist. He has gold rings in his ears and a wide-brimmed hat on the back of his head. He is just now "high in oath" and is directing the division of the silver with the point of a cutlass, deciding any finer detail by a throw of the dice.

His crew are an unsavoury gang of wide-shouldered, iron-limbed men. They affect bright-tinted shirts, voluminous breeches and bare legs. Some have their hair gathered up into greasy nets,

others wear a pigtail tied around with a strip of bunting. The most popular head covering is a palm-leaf hat or a gaudy handkerchief wrapped about the forehead, turban-wise. One man is nursing the stump of an arm which is bound up in bloody linen secured by spun yarn. Between them they show wounds enough to keep a surgeon busy. They are much tattooed; the favourite designs that grace their skins being a cross, a naked woman and a devil with a forked tail. On one man's shaggy chest hangs a crucifix, while round the bull-neck of another is a lady's string of pearls. They are armed with pistols and hangers as well as with long knives in shark-skin sheaths.

Such were the Buccaneers, and it is small wonder that they struck terror wherever they came. Their early exploits are well illustrated by an account of a foray conducted by the then leader, Pierre le Grand, a native of Dieppe.

The sea rovers were at the time in low water, being indeed short of food, short of ships, short of everything. They contrived, however, to man a large native *canoa* with a crew of twenty-eight meat-curers. Leaving Tortuga they crept along the coast of Española as far as Cape Tiburon, but met with no fortune on the way. Off the cape these weary men with empty stomachs were refreshed by a glorious sight. A huge Spanish galleon, flying the flag of the vice-admiral of the fleet, was making for the Windward Passage close hauled.

The wind was light, the sun dazzling, and the sea almost without a ripple. The crew of the man-of-war were lying down in the shadow of the bulwarks or in the lee of the deck-house. The watch had nothing to do but idle away the afternoon. No one would dare attack an admiral's galleon. So the *canoa* with the twenty-eight hungry meat-curers passed by unnoticed. With superb audacity the buccaneers paddled under the towering stern, jammed the rudder and clambered up on to the deck by means of the channel boards.

The quartermaster at the helm, who was nodding over the tiller dreaming of Castile, was knocked senseless by a blow on the skull. The first dazed man of the watch who stumbled to his

feet had a long knife driven through his chest. Pierre and his crew then rushed into the state cabin, knocking over the sentinel as they stumbled down the stair. The captain and his officers were sitting round a table in their shirt sleeves playing cards. Through the door burst the savage rabble of half-naked, unkempt men. "Jesus bless us!" yelled the captain, throwing down his cards; "are these devils or what are they?"

In a while, after much hubbub of pistol shot and cutlass hacks, mingled with the crashing of furniture and the cursing of men, the cabin became as quiet as before. Pierre landed all the Spaniards he did not want, dined sumptuously in the card-strewn cabin and sailed his prize home to France, where he sold her to his great profit and contentment.[1]

[1] *The Buccaneers of America*, by John Esquemeling: London, 1893. *History of the Buccaneers of America*, by Captain James Burney, R.N.: London, 1891. *On the Spanish Main*, by John Masefield: London, 1906. Dampier's *Voyages*.

LII.

"OUR WELL BELOVED."

ESPAÑOLA is associated with a critical period in the life of that picturesque pirate, Captain Kidd. William Kidd was a native of Greenock, and a reputable seaman who traded industriously along the American coast. He was so much respected by those who knew him that in 1695 he was entrusted with a commission to suppress piracy. The commission emanated from "William the Third, by the grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith," and was addressed to "our trusty and well beloved Captain William Kidd, of the ship *Adventure*, gally."

The well-beloved William was instructed to deal summarily with "divers wicked and ill-disposed persons who were committing many and great pyraces to the great danger and hurt of our loving subjects."[1] William was indeed to purge the seas, to stamp out wickedness, and to proclaim on the ocean highways the majesty of the law.

The *Adventure* sailed from Plymouth on her most righteous mission in May 1696, with a crew of 155 men all intent upon a search for the "wicked and ill-disposed persons" above named. None of these depraved people, however, appear to have come in the way of the trusty captain. He reported no arrests, he brought in no prizes, and, as a matter of fact, nothing was heard of him after he had passed from beyond the English Channel. The *Adventure*, indeed, might have sailed away into the clouds.

News did come at last, and the purport of the same was discouraging. It was rumoured that this guardian of the law, this

[1] *The History of the Pyrates*, by Captain C. Johnson, vol. ii. : London, 1726.

protector of "our loving subjects," was himself actually doing an excellent business as a pirate. Among other exploits he had taken a rich French merchantman named the *Queda*. Now it so happened that the missionary ship *Adventure* at this juncture was pronounced unseaworthy, so Master Kidd very heartlessly sunk her, after he had removed his guns, his stores, and his more treasured cabin furniture to the *Queda*.

He sailed his vessel to Española and there heard—probably at San Domingo—that he was "wanted," and indeed that there was a warrant out against him for divers acts of piracy. This so hurt the finer feelings of Kidd, the well beloved of kings, that he bought a sloop at Española and hurried over to Boston to explain the true facts to the authorities, and to vindicate his honour. Kidd, it may be mentioned, had never shown himself to be lacking in audacity.

His explanation was to the effect that his crew had proved to be utterly abandoned, and had, indeed, so far forgotten themselves that they had threatened to shoot him and had actually locked him up in his cabin. While he was thus rudely confined, and trying to console himself no doubt by reading once more the charming communication made to him by William the Third, the Defender of the Faith, these profligate men had committed acts of piracy to his infinite pain and distress. He had felt it his duty to hurry to Boston to tell the kind governor how very base his men had been, and to seek his sympathy and support.

Asked what had become of the *Queda*, and her cargo of goods valued at 70,000*l*., the ill-used William deeply regretted that he was unable to inform his Excellency on that point. Asked as to the welfare of a certain gunner on the *Adventure* named Moore, Master Kidd reported, with some emotion, that that mariner was no longer with them; in fact, the bereaved captain could do no more than say, in the words of Scripture, that Moore "was not, for the Lord took him." Asked whether he had smashed Moore's skull in by hitting him over the head with a bucket the suppressor of pirates owned that he had adopted that method of rebuking Moore. Moore, he explained, was unfortunate in his manner, was disrespectful and indeed mutinous. Furthermore he

was constrained to add, without wishing to speak ill of the dead, that the late gunner had shown an odious leaning towards piracy.

As a result of this informing conversation in the Governor's office at Boston "our trusty and well beloved Captain William Kidd" found himself, with some of his crew, in the dock of the Old Bailey in the month of May 1701. So faithless was William the Third to his trusty servant that Kidd actually came to be charged in the King's name with being a pirate and with being the murderer of Gunner Moore. Such are the uncertainties of the law that on both these indictments the ex-captain was found guilty.

Nine of the crew of the *Adventure* were tried with their misunderstood master. Three of these were dismissed and among them was Richard Barlicorne, the apprentice, who probably had blood-congealing tales to tell when he reached the shelter of the alehouse in his native village.

Kidd and his six companions were hanged at Execution Dock on May 23. They were afterwards "hung up in chains, at some distance from each other, down the River, where their bodies hung exposed for many years." There is little doubt but that for long sailor men, beating up and down the Thames in their hoys and billyboys, would look out for a wind-blown gibbet on the dreariest mud flat, and would say as they passed "There swings Captain Kidd."

All that was left of him in time was a tangle of white bones in a rusty cage, with shoes still rattling on the feet, with shreds hanging from the limbs which might be rags of clothing or strips of skin, and with teeth which chattered when the jawbone was shaken in the breeze. There they swung for dismal months, Kidd and his crew of six, watching the tide swirl up and down the stream, watching the home-coming craft and the outward bound. Perhaps Richard Barlicorne, when his nerves were a little restored, may have had the curiosity to visit the Thames to have a look at the captain with whom he had served his strange apprenticeship. He may well have wondered where his own place would have been in the jangling line if the evidence had been a little more convincing.

The estate of Captain William Kidd, deceased, realised the sum of 6742*l.* 1*s.*, which money was handed over to Greenwich Hospital. That admirable institution may therefore count a dead buccaneer among its subscribers, and acknowledge that it owes some benefits to acts of piracy on the high seas.

The *Queda*, merchantman, was never found. It is supposed that the treasure she contained was buried on an island, and that the deserted ship, with many auger holes in her bilge, hid her shame —as did the *Adventure*—in the depths of the blameless sea. Common rumour said that it was on Gardiner's Island that most of the loot was hidden. Whether that be true or not it is certain that the property never came again into the possession of its rightful owners. Very probably some of Kidd's old companions, by the aid of mystic and much-thumbed charts, went back to the cave where, with many a glance seaward, they dug furtively for the pieces of gold and the bags of precious stones.

Readers of fiction will remember that, according to Edgar Allan Poe, a Mr. William Le Grand discovered this identical booty by means of a gold bug, a human skull in a tree, and a miraculously preserved parchment on which was drawn the figure of a kid. This particular treasure was found in the regulation chest of the pirate story, to wit, in a much knobbed trunk provided with six iron rings. The wealth contained therein was, in the matter of profusion and brilliancy, scarcely eclipsed by the villain's horde on the pantomime stage. The catalogue comprised much gold, together with 110 diamonds, "some of them exceedingly large and fine," 83 crucifixes and no less than "197 superb gold watches, all richly jewelled and in cases of great worth."

The gold watches are quite *en règle*. All popular coloured prints depicting "The Mariner's Return" show a smirking lady in a short frock greeting a bearded seaman, who, besides the orthodox bundle on a stick, carries a parrot and a number of gold watches with chains. The strange fowl serves to indicate an acquaintance with foreign parts, the time-pieces the invariable reward of the faithful and conscientious follower of the sea.

LIII.

ON THE WAY TO JAMAICA.

THE next authorised stopping place in the way of our steamer was Kingston, Jamaica ; but owing to the earthquake it had been decreed that we could not put in there, but must go rather to Port Antonio on the north of the island.

The first intimation of the calamity which had befallen Kingston reached me at Trinidad. The news came in this wise. The ship had hardly dropped her anchor off Port of Spain before we were boarded by the usual miscellaneous folk who emerge from the waters of every tropical haven. Among them was a heated man, in a white linen jacket, who was tense to bursting from something within him. He asked me hurriedly, and in the manner of an irritable policeman, "Where I was going?" I said "To Kingston, Jamaica." He replied authoritatively "You cannot go there," as if Kingston were a place from which trespassers were excluded. I asked "Why?" He said "Because Kingston does not exist ; there is no such place." I was about to inquire who had thus rudely tampered with the map of the globe, when he remarked, with a gush of pent-up breath, "It has been wiped out by an earthquake! Clean gone! Not a brick left!" Before I could explain that I was not going to Kingston in search of bricks he had vanished explosively.

On the journey from San Domingo to Port Antonio the steamer crosses the ocean highway on whose broad bosom was enacted the opening scene of the "War of Jenkins' Ear." The parties to this bitter conflict were the two great European Powers, England and Spain. The war was the outcome of long-existing differences, of petty insults and of irritating reprisals. Relations

between the two peoples were clouded and threatening, yet the thunderbolt had not fallen. It was Jenkins' ear that brought the whole seething, smouldering business to a climax. It was Jenkins' auricle that caused the storm to burst. The British had been heroically patient, but when they contemplated this fragment of the anatomy of Jenkins their restraint gave way. It was no longer possible to hold back the dogs of war.

Robert Jenkins was the master of the brig *Rebecca*, and was engaged in trading between the West Indies and London. In April 1731, the unsuspecting *Rebecca* was returning home to London from Jamaica by this very passage. Robert Jenkins had a full cargo; he was at peace with all men, and was looking forward to the enjoyment of "the blessings of the land with the fruits of his labours." He may be assumed to have been sailing along, humming to himself the then equivalent of "Home, Sweet Home," when he was brutally attacked by a Spanish *Guarda-costa*, who boarded him in a most offensive and truculent manner. The gentle Jenkins could offer no resistance; so the Spaniard promptly looted the brig and robbed the master of his little all.

Before the miscreants left the naked and bewildered *Rebecca* to find her way as best she could to London, a very sickly episode was witnessed on her decks. The exact *mise en scène* is a little obscure. Probably Jenkins was rude to the officer and very likely "cheeked" him, as a sailor from the Lower Thames could do with great power. I expect Robert was chased about the deck cursing, was caught by black-bearded men, who dragged him aft by his coat collar and then tied him with ropes to the mainmast. There he would be in sight of such of his crew as had fled below and, by standing on the table, were able to peep out of the cabin skylight. The scene of martyrdom would be in sight also of Jenkins' dog who was cowering, with a look of ineffectual compassion, under the bulwarks.

The captain of the *Guarda-costa* now approached Jenkins with a grin, and taking hold of one of his red ears as if it had been a ripe fruit, lopped it off from his head with a heavy knife. The blood, no doubt, squirted across the deck; the dog would crawl

out to inspect the crimson blotch, would understand its meaning and retire still more humbly compassionate. Any of the crew at the skylight who had a grudge against the "old man" may have grinned and have remarked, with leering satisfaction, that "the skipper had got something for himself this time."

The Spaniard, with the fine courtesy of his race, placed Jenkins' auricle on the binnacle with ostentatious care, as if it had been a floral offering. He then earnestly begged Jenkins to take the memento home with him, and, bowing gravely, wished the master of the *Rebecca* "Bon voyage!"

How Jenkins expressed himself to his shipmates after the visitors had left and while his bands were being loosened is not known. That he commented upon the behaviour of the Spaniards in the vivid language of Wapping is probable; that he kicked the fawning and too sympathetic dog is also probable.

"First Aid" would, no doubt, be rendered him by the ship's carpenter, who, in conformity with the surgery of the time, would staunch the bleeding with crude turpentine, and then dress the stump with a piece of bunting dipped in lamp oil, and secured by a red handkerchief.

One thing Jenkins did not fail to do. He did not forget to bring his ear back with him, as the courteous Spaniard had advised. He probably placed the precious relic between two folds of sail cloth, and then locked it up in the drawer where he kept his sextant, his Bible and his bottle of rum. There at least it would be safe from the rats. The *Rebecca* was a long time getting home, for she did not reach London until June 11, by which date the stump of Jenkins' ear, stimulated, no doubt, from time to time by the application of a little tar, must have been nicely healed.

Jenkins, when he had berthed his brig in the Thames, lost no time in proclaiming his martyrdom and in bringing his sufferings before a horrified country. The ear no doubt was exhibited upon many a tavern table to both publicans and sinners, and was shown as well to the shocked parson and to the indignant squire. If the repeated narrative made Jenkins thirsty they were

many who were proud to relieve that thirst if only they might hold the seaweed-coloured remains for a moment in their very hands. Jenkins' dead ear became the badge of an infuriated faction, just as was once the red rose of Lancaster and the white rose of York.

In 1738 the master of the *Rebecca* gained to the fountain head, for he was examined before a committee of the House of Commons. Seven years had now elapsed since the operation and, as antiseptics were not then in use, Jenkins' pinna, or external ear, must have been sadly changed. Its outlines would probably have become as indefinite as those of a crushed date.

That the captain attended at Westminster in his best clothes and with his hair nicely tied up in a pigtail may be assumed. That the amputation stump was not looking its best at the time is probable. Jenkins, however, at the inquiry brought forth the relic, or rather, as the historian says, "he produced *something* which he asserted was his ear." This something he no doubt extracted from his trousers pocket with great solemnity and deliberation. It was a dramatic moment. The *something* would be between two layers of much-thumbed sail cloth. Jenkins would proceed to separate the parts as a man would open a sandwich to demonstrate what was within it. Then to the sickened legislators would he reveal a horrible thing called by its owner an ear, but which might as well be the shrivelled husk of some ill-smelling fruit.

There appears to have been no anatomical examination made of the "specimen." The committee were indeed quite uneasy until it was wrapped up and lurched back into Jenkins' pocket again.

The captain made one mistake. He was asked by an inquisitive member of the committee how he felt under the operation. Jenkins was ready for this. Drawing himself erect, and removing the tobacco quid from his cheek for clearer speech, the injured mariner, with eyes turned to heaven and with uplifted hand, said "I committed my soul to God and my cause to my country!" Now this was not like Jenkins. This was not the

speech of Gravesend nor of Port Royal. It was very beautiful, very noble, but it was not Wapping.

Anyhow the ear, or the something asserted to be an ear, led to the war, which same was declared some few months after Jenkins' inspiring speech. It was not a very successful campaign; so people began to turn against Jenkins. They began to regard his story as "extremely doubtful," if not a pure invention. They considered him, in short, a liar. The least kindly disposed went so far as to say that the disgusting thing that Jenkins had hawked about for seven years was not a human ear at all, and that if it was, then Jenkins had lost it in the pillory in the ordinary course of justice.

The island of Jamaica, which we are now approaching, has been in the possession of England since 1655. It was captured in that year by Penn and Venables, who had been sent out by Cromwell with general instructions "to obtain establishment in that part of the West Indies which is possessed by the Spaniards."

These two warriors are always spoken of as "Penn and Venables" as if they were members of some commercial firm. They were a very curious couple. Penn was an admiral and Venables a general. They left England on Christmas Day 1654, and made for San Domingo, which they reached in April of the next year. Here Venables landed with a force of 7000 men for the purpose of taking the city. His army was undisciplined, ill paid, and ill equipped. He was disgracefully repulsed, for his men turned and fled from a small party of negroes and Spaniards who burst out upon them from an ambush with horrible yells, close under the walls of the city.[1]

Venables declined to try again; so the firm left Española and moved on to Jamaica. They reached Passage Fort, the seaward fort of the old capital, on May 10. Penn had had, by this time, quite enough of soldiers and more than enough of Venables, so he led the attack himself in a little galley called the *Martin*, stormed the fort and took it, and, with it, Jamaica.

The military partner in the firm did not land until he saw that

[1] *The Royal Navy*, by Sir William Laird Clowes, vol. ii.: London, 1897.

all resistance was over, and although the British boats came by cheering, close to the ship on which he stood, "he continued walking about, wrapped up in his cloak, with his hat over his eyes, looking as if he had been studying of physic more than the general of an army." It may be here said that the costume and attitude of Venables during this crisis are not characteristic of the modern medical student during periods of disturbance, although it may be a correct picture of the budding doctor in Cromwellian times.

It is probable that Venables, as he stalked the deck with his hat over his eyes, was thinking of trout and dace fishing, for he was the author of a work entitled "The Experienced Angler, or Angling Improved."

The experienced angler reached England on September 9, 1655, "almost a skeleton," and was promptly sent to the Tower, where he possibly occupied his enforced leisure by fishing in the moat.

Admiral Penn, when he returned from the wars, was also at once sent to the Tower, as if it had been a convalescent home for officers. His imprisonment, however, only lasted a few weeks, for the charge against him was merely that of returning home without leave.

Penn, who had suffered so much from the acts of his junior partner, is described as "a mild-spoken, fair-haired man, with a comely round visage." He would seem, therefore, to have been a gentle creature of the type of the Cheeryble Brothers, but Pepys, who was his surbordinate, hated him with a poisonous hatred. He has made him immortal in his famous Diary, where he refers to him as "a mean and cunning rogue," as "a very villain," and finally, in the delirium of his wrath, as "a coxcomb."

THE KING'S HOUSE, SPANISH TOWN.

A STREET IN SPANISH TOWN.

LIV.

SPANISH TOWN.

JAMAICA, as the world well knows, is a gracious and beautiful island, of whose delights many appreciative accounts are to be found in the literature of the West Indies. Possessed of an infinitely picturesque coast line, of glorious valleys and romantic glades, of such heights as the Blue Mountains, of such rivers as the Roaring River and the Rio Cobre, Jamaica may claim to be, as John Sparke[1] would express it, "a country marvellously sweet."

Those to whom Port Antonio chances to afford the earliest sight of a West Indian harbour will well understand why Columbus named the first bay that he came upon Santa Gloria, and why the early travellers spoke of the island as an earthly paradise. The palm-fringed haven of Port Antonio is as delightful a spot as will be found anywhere in these seas. The town itself is an American settlement, to which flock, in the winter time, countless tourists from the United States.

The place, though small, is the centre of the banana trade between the island and the great continent. Banana plants flood the adjacent land with leagues of delicate green. They cover the feet of the everlasting hills; they line each dip and dell; they follow the highway persistently all the way across the country to the very outskirts of Kingston.

It is a better and finer banana than that which so delighted the comrades of Drake. Those hungry pioneers described it with gusto as a fruit that "when it waxeth ripe the meat which filleth the rind of the cod becometh yellow and is exceedingly sweet and pleasant."

[1] The record-keeper of John Hawkins' expeditions.

The banana was but one of many things, by the bye, which excited the admiration of the curious who came into these parts. The alligators of Jamaica—which are still to be found plentifully enough in the Black River—much interested the men of the sea. "Among these caymans," writes Esquemeling the buccaneer, "some are found to be of a corpulency very horrible to the sight." (This is noticeable, for the pirate was not easily shocked by what he saw.) The same visitor was greatly charmed with certain crickets which were "of an extraordinary magnitude, and so full of noise that they are ready to burst themselves with singing if any person comes near them."

Many of the animals reported upon by observant adventurers are no longer to be found in the island, nor indeed upon the face of the globe. Among these is a reptile described by a French mariner as "a serpent with three heads and four feet, of the bigness of a great spaniel, which, for want of an arquebus, he durst not attempt to slay." But for this unfortunate lack of a weapon the Museum of the Louvre might have become possessed of a unique natural history specimen of great worth.

Another extinct animal is a species of wild pig. These pigs were seen on the adjacent mainland by no less a person than Don Alonzo Enriquez de Guzman.[1] They were "somewhat smaller than those in Castile," says this precise observer, but were peculiar in having "their navels on their backs." Lest any one should doubt this anatomical peculiarity in the Caribbean swine, the conscientious De Guzman adds "I say this because I have seen them; for I shall tell no lies, because I must give an account to God of what you may here read." This is a brave saying of the gallant Spaniard, for truth is always precious.

Wherever may be the point of landing in Jamaica, one of the first places to be visited on the island will certainly be Spanish Town. This place is about thirteen miles from Kingston, and can be reached by rail—but by a back-aching journey—from Port Antonio.

Spanish Town is the old capital of Jamaica. It was founded

[1] Hakluyt Society, 1862.

in 1523, and was known as the City of St. Jago de la Vega. When the British came into the possession of the island this name was a little more than the ordinary seaman could manage. It was gibberish unworthy of any reputable city; so they called the place Spanish Town, and that title it retains to this day. It remained the capital and the seat of government until the year 1871, when the representative of the Crown removed to Kingston with his horses, and his men, and his retinue of white-jacketed servants.

Spanish Town was left to its memories. By the banks of the Rio Cobre it had leisure to ruminate over the emotions of three centuries and a half, during which period the heart of the colony beat within its walls. It can look back upon times of terror and days of elation, as well as upon many a proud moment when the fate of the island hung upon its voice.

It may be expected that at Spanish Town will be found the time-blackened wall, the barbican and the moat, the steep cobble-stoned way that leads up by ruffian walls to the castle gate, the mumbling lane that creeps bent-backed under the shadow of tottering houses, the alcaide's mansion with a well in its court, and the blustering quarters of the Spanish guard. There is, however, none of this. Spanish Town lies on a flat by the Rio Cobre, a little grandmotherly village that is much given to detached villas with white walls, ample green shutters, and overgrown gardens. Of old Spain there is no trace left. There is no encircling rampart, for St. Jago de la Vega now fades imperceptibly into the country.

It is a small, sweet place, quaint, quiet, and sound asleep. It is a village where there is eternal summer; where the trees are always green, where flowers are ever in bloom. Most of the houses are of wood, with ash-coloured shingles on the roof; many are old, and made exquisite in tint by centuries of sun. All are gay with jalousies or verandahs, with balconies or breezy porches, for it is hard to keep out the flood of light which pours down upon this "level mead." After three centuries of strenuous life Spanish Town would seem to have resolved to doze out the rest of its life

in the sun. The clean bright streets are deserted ; the few folk who are abroad are limp with a becoming languor ; there is no apparent trade in the ancient capital, and no evidence of any serious industry or specific occupation.

The recent earthquake gave an unkind shock to this drowsy city, whereby the few houses that are built of brick suffered acutely. There is the element of wantonness about this rude shaking of Spanish Town. It is as if an opium eater, asleep in a field, had been suddenly tossed into the air by a rabid bull.

The relics of the past grandeur of Spanish Town are to be found collected together in a central square. The square practically constitutes the metropolis, since outside the enclosure there are merely rustic suburbs. The square is a curious and unexpected place. Among negro huts, palm trees and tropical bungalows is introduced the prudish market-place of a small provincial town in England. It is emphatically a genteel square, yet severe and parochial. In the centre is just such a garden, within iron railings, as would be proper to Bloomsbury. On one side is the House of Assembly, with a long colonnade of brick arches, of a type to be met with in the Tunbridge Wells or the Buxton of bygone days. So suggestive is the whole place of a spa, that this building will be at once pronounced by visitors to be the pump room.

Opposite to the House of Assembly is the King's house, which building was, until recent years, the official residence of the governor. It has all the chastened features of the provincial town hall, white pillars supporting a heavy portico, a solemn front door, and such windows as should adorn the parlour of a mayor. It has no affectation of exclusiveness, no air of withdrawing itself from the vulgar gaze, no carriage drive, no forbidding gates. It stands, with friendly condescension, close to the roadway, so close, indeed, that little boys can look in at the lower windows by clinging to the sills.

On another flank of the square is Rodney's Memorial. It takes the form of an octagonal kiosk, or classic temple, surmounted by a dome and flanked by a colonnade of Ionic pillars.

RODNEY'S MONUMENT, SPANISH TOWN.
The damage done by the earthquake will be noticed.

One rather expects to find inside a jet of water pouring from a stone, and an old woman, provided with drinking mugs, collecting coppers. The statue is by Bacon and is, no doubt, worthy of being admired. Rodney is bareheaded and naked to the waist. He wears sandals, has a toga hanging from his shoulders, and a kilt girt about his loins. His hand rests not upon a cutlass but upon a shield. His attempt to assume the character of an ancient Roman is not very convincing, for it is impossible to mistake the fine, vigorous, British face of the redoubtable seaman. In front of him are the two great cannons he took from the *Ville de Paris* of which mention has been already made (page 176).

On the remaining side of the square is the Court House, as provincial as the rest, surmounted by an old and respectable clock tower. The building suggests quarter sessions and sheriffs, and it would be quite appropriate if Bumble, with his staff, stood on guard at the entry. The whole of this quaint market town square is indeed so well in keeping, that one only misses the farmers gossiping in the roadway, the yokels, the carriers' carts, and the country-women's booths.

In an indefinite clearing among the suburbs, in the midst of the bungalows and the palms, is to be found the English Cathedral. It is stated to occupy "one of the oldest ecclesiastical sites in the New World," and to have been built upon the foundations of the ancient Spanish church of the Red Cross. The structure is large and dignified, is cruciform in outline, and is furnished with a tower capped by a white steeple of wood. It is built of red bricks which have faded, in the progress of years, to a dainty rose-colour. A tablet states that the tower was thrown down by a hurricane in 1712, and was re-erected two years later. Around it, in a garden-like burial ground, is a host of ancient tombs, many of which are now ruinous. The main building, especially the south transept, has been seriously damaged by the earthquake.

This venerable church is the Westminster Abbey of Jamaica. The memorials which crowd its walls tell in stone the history of the island, for here all the great folk of the colony were buried for

many a century. Here lie the makers of Jamaica as well as its martyrs, governors and their consorts, generals and sea captains, judges, advocates and doctors, young subalterns and little children. They come from all parts of England and of Scotland, as well as from the "Kingdom of Ireland." Many of the monuments are exquisite and indeed passing beautiful, especially those carved by the chisel of John Bacon, the Royal Academician.

These tablets and cenotaphs are rich with coats of arms, with copious poetry, with classic urns, with untempered eulogy. They all breathe, however, that poignant tenderness which clings to the memory of those who died in exile. Saddest of all is it to note how many of those remembered died at sea, "going home."

SPANISH TOWN—ONE OF COMTE DE GRASSE'S GUNS FROM THE "VILLE DE PARIS," TAKEN BY RODNEY, 1782.

A STREET IN SPANISH TOWN.

LV.

KINGSTON IN RUINS.

I REACHED Kingston less than a month after the disastrous earthquake, travelling from Port Antonio by train across the island. On approaching the capital we looked out anxiously for signs of ruin, but there was nothing noteworthy to be seen along the line. From what could be observed, as the train ran into the terminus, the station itself would seem to be uninjured. There was the usual disorder on the platform incident to the arrival of the chief train of the day. Without, in the glare of the sun, were the familiar rabble of a station yard, the crowd of carts and of cabs, the yelling drivers, the importunate boys. One almost expected to find the people preoccupied, if not lachrymose or destitute-looking, but there was just the bustling, amiable crowd as it had been any day for the last ten years.

We jumped into a buggy, and told the man to get out of the hubbub and drive through the town. In a moment we were in a death-like silence and in a scene of blank desolation. The road was so thick with fine dust that the wheels of the buggy and the horse's hoofs made no sound. There was hardly a living soul in sight. The change was astounding. It can only be appreciated by those who have escaped from the rattle and chaos of the railway station at Venice to find themselves in a gondola, dazed by the stillness of the Grand Canal.

The destruction in the part of the city which we had entered was complete, for what the earthquake had left the fire demolished. It seemed as if the man on the steamer at Trinidad had spoken truth when he said that Kingston no longer existed. The roads had been cleared, but no attempt of any kind had been

made at even a casual restoration. Almost as strange as the silence was the greyness of the scene, the absence of all colour, the sense of a desert of pale stone. With it too was the unwonted light, for as all the roofs and upper stories had vanished, and as many of the houses were left no higher than a garden wall, the city seemed bared to the heavens, bared to its very bones and whitened ribs. The impression of desolation was more absolute than that presented by the ruins of St. Pierre, for there creepers and weeds had covered the waste, and had smoothed the edges of jagged walls.

Let the Londoner imagine himself standing at the point where the great thoroughfares of Regent Street and Oxford Street intersect. Let him conceive those streets silent, empty of human beings, and covered deep with white dust as if with snow. Let him picture the houses, as far as the eye could stretch, in ruins, roofless and windowless, crushed down to the height of some dozen feet, mere pens of stone filled with charred rubbish; and then let him realise that this desolation extended on all sides over an area of nearly sixty acres, and he will appreciate how Kingston appeared to those who knew it as a place once bristling with affairs and astir with life.

There hung above the town at the time a mist of dust, horrible to breathe, and with it drifted, now and then, a loathsome smell which was not merely that of smouldering débris.

Over the heaps of bricks and stone along the street would be trailing a tangled network of wires, as if some dreadful bramble, with stalks and tendrils of iron, was crawling across the place when its leaves were blasted into dust. Among the chaos are lamp-posts, aimless rain-water pipes, the iron pillars of a long arcade, girders and rods, the railings of a balcony the fragment of an iron stair.

The ample roofs of corrugated iron, so common in these parts, have taken to themselves strange shapes. In one place a mighty plate, fifty feet wide, coiled up into a cone, covers the ruin in the manner of a tent. In another spot a long drooping sheet, stretched over many walls looks like a dragon's wing. Some

of the forlorn wrecks of houses seem to have wrapped themselves round with a covering of this iron as with a cloak. From one building the metal roof has been twisted off by the fire and dropped on end among the stones, where it stands like some hideous cactus sprouting in the wilderness. Along the wharves sheets of corrugated iron strew the ground in drifts like heaped-up autumn leaves. At a few points are charred trees, rising stiff and metallic-looking against the sky. They make a fitting perching place for the carrion crows who still watch the ruins hungrily.

All the individuality of the various houses is blotted out. In one court, half choked with bricks, is the skeleton of a buggy, suggesting that the place in which it stands was once a coach-house. A mass of blackened goods, pots, pans, and saws, indicate an ironmonger's shop, a holocaust of broken bottles marks a beer store. Still on one house front is the placard "Gents' Ties," while to a scorched wall hangs by one nail a plaque with the inscription "Try our Cooler."

The streets at night, when lit only by the light of the moon, are veritable streets of the dead. There are no lamps of any kind by the roadside. Each causeway is slashed by the shadows of notched walls so black and sharply cut that they lie on the white paths as if inlaid in jet. Within the roofless houses are other shadows that take the shape of crouching figures, or the semblance of upstretched arms; while a pillar with a wire dangling from it throws on the cross roads the black outline of a gibbet.

The ways are silent, muffled by the ashy dust. One dares only speak in a whisper. There is not a living creature to be seen in the ghostly lanes except a prowling dog or some scurrying rats, for the negro shuns the gaunt city after the sun has set. He fears to see spectral women grubbing for their dead among the stones, and to hear the stifled cries of those who still lie buried beneath the ruins.

Beyond the burned area and in the suburbs, although the earthquake has been as destructive, there is less the sense of utter annihilation. There are here the movement and colour of life,

signs of human occupation and the companionship of gardens and green trees. The mango is breaking into blossom, and the lignum vitæ is covered with flowers of a deep forget-me-not blue. Once more there are definite days in the week ; once more the routine of existence, so abruptly checked, is moving unconcernedly.

Some of the houses and villas are mere shapeless heaps, represented by a roof lying flat on a lawn, a roof from under whose eaves has poured forth on every side a cascade of bricks. There is not a house still standing that does not show sinuous cracks, like streaks of lightning, down its sides, bulging walls, a missing portico, or a medley of débris in its just vacated rooms.

In many an instance the front or side wall of the house has fallen away from the building, revealing the rooms, floor by floor, just as a doll's house is exposed when its hinged front is thrown back. Here every intimate corner from the attic to the cellar, from the drawing-room to the black cook's bedroom, is open to the eyes of inquisitive neighbours. The curious can see how an acquaintance's guest room was papered, and how well or ill it was kept.

The bedstead is in place, its mosquito curtains are undisturbed, while a mass of plaster weighs down the tidy coverlet. The pictures swing on the wall, but at strange angles ; there are clothes on a peg ; one drawer of a chest of drawers has slid open, as the house rocked over, and none have ventured to close it. The bedroom door is ajar; it leads out to the fragment of a staircase pendent in the open air. In a lower room the table is heaped up with wreckage, but the tablecloth is just as the neat hands of the housewife left it. Heavy joists have crushed through the sofa, while among the pile of rubbish are an overturned rocking-chair, a lamp and some children's toys. The upper floor of the dwelling drops into the basement room like the lid of a box. A window blind flaps from the shred of a casement. An electric light hangs into a room that has no floor and only two walls. To some wrecks of houses balconies are clinging, impotent and crazy, but still covered with creepers.

The statue of Queen Victoria, near the public gardens, shows

a curious effect of the disturbance. The immense mass of marble with its heavy pedestal has been shaken like a glass on a shelf, and so rotated upon its plinth that the figure, otherwise uninjured, faces in a different direction.

The venerable Parish Church of Kingston presents an astounding appearance. This picturesque old building of red brick has already escaped four disastrous conflagrations, each one of which laid low the town,[1] and now, remarkable enough, the fire was stayed within a few yards of its doors. The square tower is surmounted by a wooden steeple, which is so tilted upon its base that it is a wonder it does not topple over into the graveyard.

The tower itself shows ragged breaches in its walls as if it had been battered by a nine-inch gun. The arches of its windows have fallen out, while through the gaping cracks in its sides it is possible to see the belfry ropes and the bells.

Within the church is a scene of incredible ruin. The east wall of the chancel having dropped away the altar and its sombre reredos are now in the open air. The great stone pillars of the nave are cracked and twisted out of the straight, as if some Titanic Samson had clasped them in his fury. The ceiling of the coved roof has fallen down, leaving bare the laths and beams. Through gashes in the walls it is possible to see into the street. Where windows stood are huge cavernous openings above a pile of glass. The chancel rails are a line of splinters. The pews, except in a few places, have been crushed to the ground by falling stones, by masses of plaster and ponderous timbers.

The fine old monuments and tablets which cover the aisles have been, for the most part, shaken to fragments. Some have fallen among the general wreckage, while others are still holding to the masonry in disjointed pieces. The floor is a wild, heaped-up waste of stones, mortar, stained glass, dust and bricks, mingled with splinters of pews, roof planks, hassocks, cushions, lamps and hymn books.

Conspicuous among the débris were two curious things—a girl's bright-coloured paper fan, and a white death's head in marble,

[1] The great fires of 1780, 1843, 1862 and 1882.

which had dropped from one of the memorials on the wall and was grinning from out of the dust.

Perched aloft above this dismal wreckage, high on the summit of the steeple and looking ever across the ruins of the forlorn city, is the golden weather-cock, still bright, valiant and cheery. As it swings contentedly in the path of the breeze, it makes the one gleam of gold against the dust-clouded sky.

THE CLUB, KINGSTON, AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE.

LVI.

A RECORD OF TEN SECONDS.

KINGSTON; Monday, January 14, 1907, at 3.30 P.M. Such were the day and the hour. The afternoon was sunny and hot; a faint breeze was astir and the town was languidly busy.

Suddenly there hissed through the streets the sound of a rushing mighty wind. Folk looked up at palm trees near by, expecting to see them bowed to the ground, but they remained unshaken.

With the phantom wind came a direr sound, a noise of something advancing with the fury of an avalanche, a sound the most portentous and unforgettable that the world knows. Those who speak of it compare it feebly to the rumble of a crowd of waggons tearing on at a gallop, to the rush of uncountable horsemen, to the hollow roaring of a train in a tunnel, to the bursting of a great river.

At the same moment the whole solid earth was shaken violently and viciously, so that men were thrown about like puppets. Then followed the appalling crash and clatter of a thousand falling houses, a burst of screams that rent the heavens, and the uprising into the air of a column of yellow dust.

For a moment after there fell upon the place a stupefying silence. Those who remember it say that this interval of stillness was the most tragic feature in the whole dread episode.

In ten seconds a town of 46,000 inhabitants had become a ruin, while some hundreds of its people were lying dead or dying beneath its wreckage. Only ten seconds! and yet the call of the many had been "Will it never stop?"

Details of the catastrophe, gained from various sources, help to complete the picture of what happened in this fateful fraction of a minute. An officer on a steamer by the quay heard the weird wind, felt the ship shaken as by an explosion, and then, looking ashore, saw the long wharf rock up and down as thin ice rocks over a wave, saw people thrown to the ground and others in strange attitudes trying to keep their balance, leaning forwards as men caught in a hurricane, leaning back as men in peril on a slope, standing with legs wide apart or clinging to posts and bollards. The great buildings swayed to and fro. Then came the din of falling walls, with the rattle of an acre of corrugated iron tumbling from roofs—whereupon the scene was immediately blotted out by dust.

A lady driving in the suburbs felt her carriage lifted up and shaken like a toy; the horses, staggering to and fro, seemed at one moment to be straining up hill and at another to be hurrying down a dip in the road. She heard a roar in the town like that of far-off artillery, and saw the yellow cloud rise slowly up into the sky.

An officer in his bungalow, dressing for tennis, felt the house roll like a ship in the sea, saw the door swing open by itself, found himself hurled through the opening and cast headlong down the stair. On reaching the garden he looked up at the building, to find the whole front wall fallen to the earth, and his wife standing in her bedroom by the dressing-table, on what seemed a mere film of a floor, dazed and looking down at him with vacant eyes. She appeared as if standing in an ascending lift.

A gentleman, paying an afternoon call, perceived the house being tilted from its foundations. He and his hostess rushed through an open window into the garden and fell to the ground. They rose, clung to one another but fell again, and as they heard the building come down behind them, crawled away on their hands and knees to the shelter of some bushes.

A party of gentlemen meeting in a hall heard the roar, felt the floor rock so that those near a table clung to it with both hands, but realised little until the ceiling began to fall and until they

saw the sunlit street through cracks in the wall. They gained the door, but one—such is the force of habit—walked back quietly for his hat and umbrella.

It was in the crowded streets of the business quarter that the din, the medley, and the fright were most acute. Many have very little idea what precisely happened or what they saw or did. One man visiting a shop found himself shaken up with the general goods of the store as if he and they were loose things in a box. He has a recollection of making for the door, of finding it blocked with barrels of flour, over which he crawled, noting incidentally that a screaming girl—whom he had never seen before—was clinging to his coat tails. In the street he found himself enveloped in a yellow fog, which shut out everything but the crackling and crunching of tumbling walls.

It was not always easy to escape into the street. A young woman in an upper room, finding the door jammed, jumped out of the window into a tree by the path, and before she could be helped down the entire building had collapsed. A lad was come upon hanging to the window sill of a house which was already roofless and floorless. Frantic people staggered down staircases which rolled from side to side like the companion-way of a ship. They clutched at the hand-rail, but it dropped out of their hands. They took one further step and fell into a pit of ruin, the stair having vanished.

One man who ran out into the road received his first realisation of the nature of the calamity by happening upon the body of a woman cut nearly in two by a sheet of corrugated iron, the sharp edge of which had fallen upon her like a hatchet.

In the streets, filled as they were with a yellow fog of dust, the scene was paralysing and uninterpretable. On all sides was the cannonading of crumbling houses: bricks came down like rain; walls were rent as if made of paper; the great timbers of a floor snapped like a bundle of sticks; telegraph poles swayed as reeds in a wind. Negroes blubbering with panic were filling the waste with howls and groans; men, hatless, coatless, smothered with dust and streaming with blood, moved aimlessly to and fro.

Among the turmoil a stupefied man stood alone, carefully brushing a little mortar from his hat. Now and then a strong voice would call out steadily, "Look out for that wall!" or "Keep clear of the wires!"

Men, trying to escape by streets they no longer knew, scrambled over heaps of stones, as shipwrecked mariners climb over rocks. They stumbled across dead horses and men and the poured out contents of shops, found themselves trapped in entanglements of wire, clung to by lost children or trampled upon by other frantic folk who were tearing to the open.

Many a heap of dust could be seen to move, for beneath it was a living man. More than one poor wretch, buried to the waist among the ruins, was held there until the fire swept down upon him and silenced his yells. If there came a lull it was broken by a fresh shaking of the earth and the renewed terror of riven walls and clattering stones.

In twenty minutes the town was ablaze, so that, as the night fell, the scene closed with the glare of fire and the roar of on-rushing flames.

THE QUEEN'S STATUE, KINGSTON, AS MOVED BY THE EARTHQUAKE.

THE PARISH CHURCH, KINGSTON, AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE.

LVII.

ADMIRAL JOHN BENBOW.

In the old Parish Church of Kingston there lies buried Admiral John Benbow. His grave, near by the chancel rails, is covered with a large black stone, embellished with a coat of arms. At the time of my visit this stone was hidden by the wreckage of the earthquake, but it was not difficult to find an unemployed negro who, with some little labour, laid it bare. The stone presents the following unpunctuated inscription :

HERE LYETH INTERRED THE
BODY OF IOHN BENBOW
ESQ ADMIRAL OF THE WHITE
A TRUE PATTERN OF ENGLISH
COURAGE WHO LOST HIS LIFE
IN DEFENCE OF HIS QUEENE
AND COUNTRY NOVEMBER YE 4TH
1702 IN THE 52ND YEAR OF
HIS AGE BY A WOUND OF HIS LEGG
RECEIUD IN AN ENGAGEMENT
WITH MONSR DU CASSE BEING
MUCH LAMENTED.

The circumstance under which this admiral of the White received the "wound of his legg" belongs to "the story of one of the most painful and disgraceful episodes in the history of the British Navy."[1] The British and the French were, as was not unusual, at war. The campaign was that same war of the Spanish Succession which is associated with the name of Marlborough, and with the famous battles of Blenheim and Ramillies. Benbow found himself opposed in the West Indies by a French fleet under

[1] *The Royal Navy*, by Sir William Laird Clowes, vol. ii. page 372 : London, 1897.

the command of Admiral Du Casse. The British battleships were collected together at Port Royal, and on July 11, 1702, the admiral set sail from that port in search of the enemy. He came up with the French on August 19, off Santa Marta, a cape on the Spanish Main between La Hache and Cartagena. The English mail steamers pass close to this point of land and through the very waters which were the scene of the engagement.

The French force consisted of five line-of-battle ships and four smaller craft. The composition of the English fleet is of some interest in view of what happened.

Ship.	Guns.	Commander.
Breda	70	Benbow.
Defiance	64	Kirkby.
Windsor	60	Constable.
Greenwich	54	Wade.
Pendennis	48	Hudson.
Falmouth	not stated	Vincent.
Ruby	„ „	Walton.

The fight began on August 21. It was a remarkable engagement, a running fight which was maintained for no less than four days, in which the *Breda* was practically left alone to do battle in the "defence of her Queene and country." The captains of the leading English vessels declined to come into touch with the French. In spite of urgent orders from the flagship they remained aloof. Although thus meanly deserted John Benbow fought on with bulldog obstinacy. He pounded away until his cannon were nearly red hot. He hung on to the enemy until spar after spar was carried away, until his sails were in holes, and his bulwarks jagged like a saw's edge. He would hear of no giving in, although his men were dropping from fatigue and although the carpenter continued to report a rising of water in the hold.

During the darkness of the night of the 23rd he was busy trying to repair some of the damage done, but as soon as there was light enough in the morning he was at the French again.

The cannonading had not long begun when the admiral's right leg was smashed by a chain-shot, and he was carried unconscious to his cabin. When he came to himself, he ordered his cot to be brought up the companion-way and placed on the quarter-deck, and here, from his bed, he gave orders for the fighting to be pressed on with to the end.

The end soon came. The odds were hopeless. The *Breda*, deserted by her consorts, was so fearfully mauled as to be almost a wreck, and it seemed doubtful if she had yards and sails enough left to carry her back to port. The admiral at last gave the order to retire to Port Royal, and sullenly withdrew from the enemy's fire.

It was a memorable episode; the *Breda*, splintered and torn, creeping away to the north slowly, like a grievously wounded man who will not own that he is beaten. Behind were the French shouting with derision. Far away on the horizon were the craven British ships slinking home like a pack of whipped curs. On the deck of the *Breda* was the admiral, lying on his cot, white with loss of blood, almost blind from shock, but still able to curse the French, to curse his captains, and above all to curse the chain-shot that had prevented him from keeping on with the fight. Still flying above him, at the masthead of the *Breda*, was the order for a general attack, a command to which only the gallant *Ruby* had responded.

The *Breda* reached Kingston Harbour in the course of time, and there the wounded admiral was taken ashore. The leg was amputated. There is little doubt but that septicæmia supervened and that it involved a long and distressing illness, for the obstinate old fighter did not die until November 4, seventy-two days after the wound had been received.

As he fought alone, so he seems to have lived alone, for he was an unlovable man. He is described as rough and off-hand in his manner, very ready to bully his subordinates, and very unready to make friends of those who chanced to be his shipmates.

On October 8, 1702, Captains Kirkby, Constable, and Wade were tried by court-martial on the charges of "cowardice,

disobedience to orders, and neglect of duty." Hudson, of the *Pendennis*, would have been indicted with the other prisoners, but he died before the court commenced. Vincent, of the *Falmouth*, was put on his trial for minor offences, more or less discreditable. The only officer of the fleet who came out of this affair with other than disgrace was George Walton, the loyal captain of the *Ruby*.

As a result of the court-martial, Kirkby and Wade were sentenced to death, and were shot at Plymouth. Constable was cashiered, and thrown into prison, where shortly after he died. Vincent was suspended. Walton was probably forgotten. So ended a miserable business, which has happily no parallel in the glorious annals of the British Navy.

PORT ROYAL.

End of Chapel wrecked by Earthquake.

FORT CHARLES, PORT ROYAL.

LVIII.

PORT ROYAL AS IT WAS.

BEAUTIFUL indeed in its setting is the little sea town of Port Royal. It stands far away from the land, a speck on the deep, at the very mouth of Kingston Harbour. This may not seem to be a long way off, but then Kingston Harbour is so wide from shore to shore as to be almost an inland sea. Or rather may it be compared to the haze-environed Venetian lagoon, which it resembles in its stillness and in the curious lantern-lit posts which mark the shoal-water channel. Rowing out along that channel recalls the lazy passage from Venice to Torcello. The names of the points that the boat idles by are not so sweet-sounding perhaps, since such titles as Devil's Cay, Hulk Hole and Gallows Point lack the graciousness of those waterways which lead to the Bridge of Sighs. The gorilla-faced negro, moreover, who grins at the oars is a sorry substitute for the gondolier.

The town in question is attached to Jamaica by a curved line of low land, some eight miles long, a mere thread of the solid earth lying in the blue sea as the sickle of a new moon swims in the sky. It is a thin crescent of malachite green edged with a rim of old gold. The green is a medley of bushes and palms, the margin of gold is a sandy beach. The palms half-way out in the lagoon are marshalled in an orderly row, like stakes in a flooded meadow, and thus it is that the far-venturing breakwater is called the Palisades.

At the very end of the curve is the little round town of Port Royal, like the eye of a peacock's feather on the tip of a plume. So flimsy is the line of the Palisades that Port Royal, when viewed from Kingston, may be an island whose connection with the main-

land has been well-nigh dissolved into the deep. Indeed, when the sun is at high noon and there is a glamour on the sea the grey walls and pointed trees that mark the spot become so unsubstantial in the blinding light that they seem to belong to the air-borne city of a mirage.

On the day of my visit there was just such a brilliant calm as Michael Scott has described, when "the anchorage was one unbroken mirror, and the reflection of the vessel was so clear and steady that at the distance of a cable's length you could not distinguish the water-line, nor tell where the substance ended and the shadow began, until the casual dashing of a bucket overboard for a few moments broke up the phantom ship; but the wavering fragments soon reunited, and she again floated double." [1]

On the land side of the harbour is the generous green plain upon which Kingston stands, a plain rich in trees, as gentle to look at as an English water-meadow, yet undermined with treachery and despair as befits the plain of the City of Destruction. Beyond the flat are the hills, and yet farther away the imperious sweep of the Blue Mountains—gentian-blue where they meet the clouds, fustian-brown where they spurn the earth. They form the walls of that heartless amphitheatre, the stepped slopes of that Coliseum which looked down upon the arena where 40,000 human beings have just battled with Death.

Port Royal in Stuart times, when the pirates came there, was—in electrical parlance—a "live" town. It had the credit of being the wickedest spot on earth within the knowledge of civilised men. Its reputation in this particular was unassailable. Whatever was pre-eminent in iniquity—especially in the department of riotous living—that Port Royal was the master of. The fervent missionary could have found no richer "field of work" than was presented by this unholy place. Any advocate of temperance who was eager to snatch brands from the burning would have found here luxuriant material. Cities famous for depravity are commonly described either as "sinks of iniquity" or as "hot-beds of crime." Port Royal was neither the one nor the other. Its wickedness was

[1] *Tom Cringle's Log.*

flamboyant, defiant and unabashed, with, it must be owned, a touch of picturesqueness about it. It covered the once dull fisher town with a blaze of scarlet, just as the tropical Bougainvillea will rollick over a homely tree, until it has hidden the prudish boughs to the very summit beneath the mantle of its crimson leaves.

This reckless settlement might have been present in the minds of the devout men who wrote the Litany in the Book of Common Prayer, since they have so precisely enumerated its particular faults and failings. It must needs have owned, for example, to a general knowledge of "all evil and mischief," as well as to an acquaintance with the "crafts and assaults of the devil." It could claim to be familiar not only with "battle, murder and sudden death," but also with "plague, pestilence and famine." It had experienced the ills of "lightning and tempest," and had suffered not a little from "sedition, privy conspiracy and rebellion." Two charges, on the other hand, it would certainly have repudiated, those, namely, of "hypocrisy" and "all uncharitableness."

Port Royal must have been a stirring spot for a number of years, and especially during the latter half of the seventeenth century. It was girt about by a wall with many a sally-port in it, while upon its point rose a grey lighthouse. It had wide quays, whereon were often to be seen piled-up bales and kegs, sacks crammed with spices and boxes full of pieces of eight, the same being guarded by mahogany-coloured men with cutlasses and with such truculent looks as would alone have daunted the very emissaries of Satan.

There were ample creeks too for careening ships and a "hard" for the boats as handy as that at Portsmouth. Here would be drawn up craft of all kinds, whale-boats and jolly-boats, boats stolen from Spanish merchantmen, native *canoas* and weather-worn Plymouth wherries. Around them would be loitering listless men, lean and in rags, prisoners from the Main, who muttered together in the hated speech of Spain. They would be watched by a contented coxswain who, lying half asleep in the sun, with his back against a wall, would heave a stone at them occasionally when their

jabber jarred on his reverie. Conspicuous on the outskirts of the port, and standing high upon a spit of green, was a gallows with a few festering bodies dangling from it.

Houses of all shapes and heights crowded together along the narrow streets of the town. Some were mere huts thatched with palm leaves ; others were of wood with seaward-looking balconies ; many were built of stone with turrets or bright-tiled roofs. There were churches too in the place and warehouses, a fort and the lines of a military barrack, ship-chandlers' shops in great abundance smelling of tarred rope, and shops full of tawdry jewelry, mostly ear-rings and finger-rings, with silks and mantillas destined for lasses in Devon, together with strange birds in cages and a stuffed alligator or two.

Slaves trundling casks along the cobbled road would be brought to a stop by a hatless mariner lying full length in the path, with no sign of life in him beyond an occasional bubble of unintelligible speech that issued from his baggy lips. Now and then a string of purple-faced revellers would lurch by, arm in arm, rolling to and fro like linked beacons in a choppy sea, bellowing as they went the refrain of a ballad learnt ten years ago in England. In a by-lane might be seen a Jew haggling with a sailor over the price of a crucifix, and in a dark corner, near by, the lank corpse of a man who had died of yellow fever.

From the taverns would issue a cloud of brandy-tainted smoke and the roar of hurricane voices, blended with the clatter of tankards, the chink of money and the occasional crash of a fist falling on a table. From other houses may come the sound of a fiddle and of men dancing in heavy boots. In the shadows of the gambling shanties sailors would be throwing dice or playing at Red and White in an ominous silence. It was a silence that was apt to be broken by shouts and snarling, or even by a pistol shot, or by the noise of a man stumbling out into the daylight coughing up blood.

It was probably in the cabins of ships in the anchorage, rather than in the town, that the serious business of Port Royal was transacted. Imagine such a cabin at night about the time of the

middle watch, a low, stifling cuddy with smoke-blackened beams. A sail has been drawn over the skylight as a guard against prying eyes. The room is lit by a guttering tallow candle stuck in an altar candlestick. It throws its light upon a chart on the table, over which some half-dozen men are leaning. It casts awful shadows of their mighty shoulders and of their battered hats upon the panelled walls, upon the shelves where gleam silver-mounted pistols, upon the half-opened locker stuffed with loot and odd gear, together with the portrait of a wife at home and the withered bunch of holly she hung up in the cabin when the ship left Plymouth one Christmas Day. A cage with a parrot hangs somewhere in the gloom, for out of the dark there comes, now and then, a cheery and inconsequent shriek of profanity.

The captain, a man in a brocaded coat, is tracing a course on the chart with the point of a dagger. His neighbour follows it with a pipe-stem, but a third man, who keeps his mutilated and thumbless hand on the paper, insists on an alternative route which he indicates with the stump of his one remaining finger.

The yellow light falls on their faces, so that their features show up as luminous points in the mirk, like prominent parts of a grotesque carving, the bridge of a nose, a scarred cheek, a lined forehead with a lock of hair hanging over it, a bared throat. The eyes of the chart readers, their heavy moustaches and shaggy beards, are all lost in the mysterious shadow.

They are deep over a scheme for a raid on the Main; they argue and wrangle in hot whispers, until the captain's clenched fist comes down on the paper with a concluding thud. The last troubled point they decide by a throw of the dice, and then, standing up, they stretch their shoulders, shake hands solemnly, and yell up the stair for a cannikin of hot rum.

Such was Port Royal when it was shaken into ruins by the fearful earthquake of 1692, when the indignant sea rose and swept down upon it with revengeful waves, when white-crested combers bellowed along the polluted streets, broke through the tavern doors, overturned the tables of the money-changers, and swept the whole fabric of iniquity into the eddying and relentless deep.

LIX.

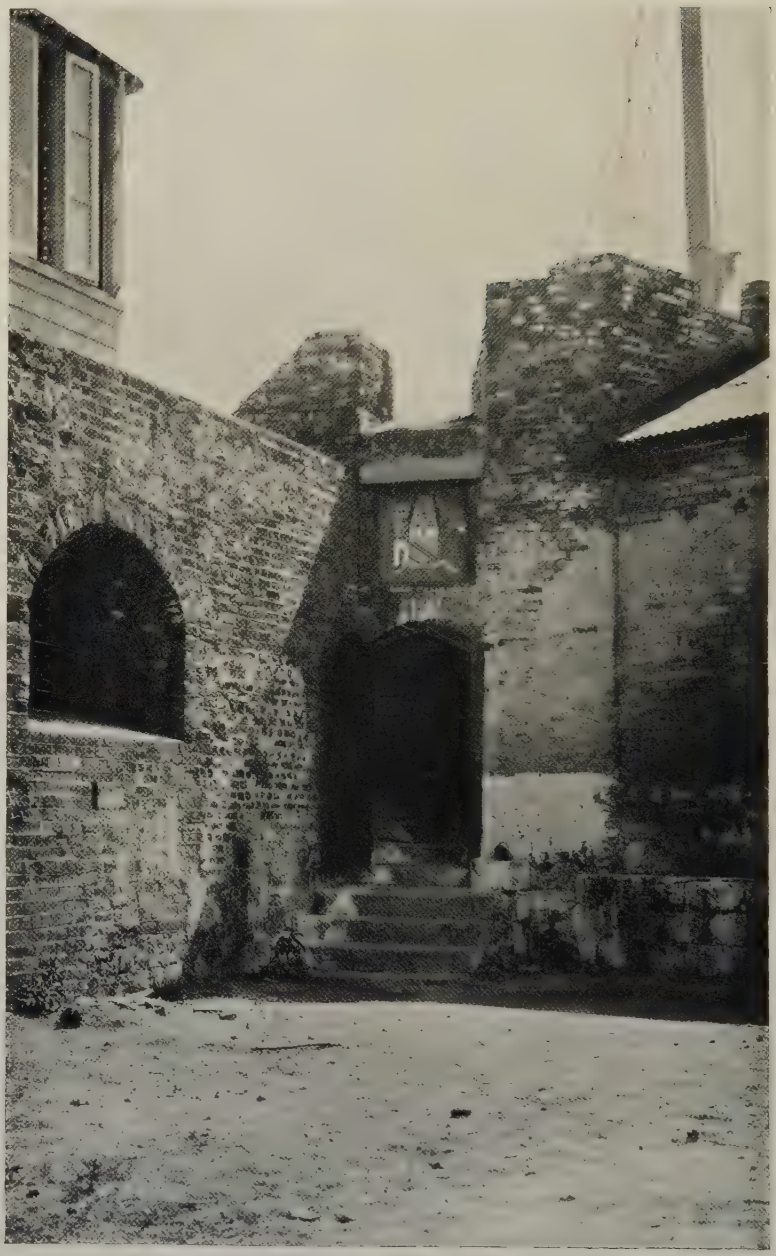
PORT ROYAL AS IT IS.

THE Port Royal of to-day is a small, bright place, brilliant with many trees, trim lawns and white walls, yet possessed with a certain air of melancholy as of a spot which has been deserted and forgotten.

It is divided into two parts—the official quarter on the point of land, and the town which stands deferentially behind it, where Port Royal joins the Palisades. The importance of Port Royal as a naval and military station is now so small that the navy has abandoned it, while the army clings to the place more, it would seem, for the sake of old memories than for any tactical reason.

The official quarter is very orderly and neat with a good deal of the drear severity of the barrack square about it, the same being, however, relieved by leisurely palm trees, by pretty gardens around the officers' houses, and by that outbreak of irresponsible green which *will* assert itself in the tropics.

The earthquake has wrought woeful damage in the place. A number of the stolid, stand-at-attention war office buildings have tumbled to the ground, while others are leaning over with all the recklessness of a drunken man on parade. There are gaping fissures in austere, official squares, as if the earth were yawning disrespectfully; concrete walls and floors have been cracked like eggshells. The little ammunition railway seems to have taken fright, for it wriggles about like a fleeing snake, while at one place its rails have leapt desperately into the air, carrying their sleepers with them. Rigid and well-disciplined paths roll up and down with the exuberance of a switchback at a fair. The immaculate flag-staff is heeling over like



FORT CHARLES, PORT ROYAL.

Entrance to Nelson's Quarters.

a sentinel asleep, and a guard-room, which should be a model of propriety, shows a wide gaping door which appears to be grinning with laughter.

The very apex of the spit of land has sunk into the deep, so that out at sea the ragged heads of palm trees can be seen just projecting above the water, as if they had gone a-bathing. In the sea, but nearer to what remains of the land, are iron railings, landing stages and melancholy sheds, which, being more or less submerged, look as if they had attempted to drown themselves when the panic seized them. One substantial barrack is quite sound in appearance when viewed from the outside, but within it is a mass of ruin, every ceiling and partition having been shaken down just as if it had suffered—as indeed it had—from a fearful rigor. The new fort, the indestructible precipice-walled fort, has been tumbled about ignominiously; its massive masonry is cracked like a potsherd, while the whole fabric is so much askew that it looks as if seen through a distorting mirror.

The saddest wreck is that of the grand old Naval Hospital, a good-natured, comforting, motherly building, standing in a mature garden as like an English garden as the handy man could make it. This kindly hostel, rich in tender associations, has been damaged grievously by the sinking of its foundations.

Nearer to the Palisades is the Naval Yard, a fascinating and picturesque place, breezy and sailor-like, and full of those quarter-deck fancies without which no mariner, it would seem, can abide the land. Here are fine, echoing store-houses for ropes and blocks, buildings with ample grey roofs and the green dormer windows of a pilot's cottage, sail lofts and hammock lofts, stiffly disposed guns, a white flag-staff of course, a lawn such as Drake may have played bowls on, with the figure-head of an old wooden ship at each corner of it, rusty anchors, a boat slip, weedy and damp, with only a windlass and a heap of chain to keep it company.

It is all very salt and hearty, but the great sheds—once full of casks, sea chests, spars and tackle, and once reverberating

with the shouts of men fitting out for home—are now empty and silent. The tide still rises and falls on the steps. It dallies over the stones, whispering like a siren. The tempting breeze steals through the bare sail lofts, as if it were a blind thing searching with outstretched hands. The far-away sea flashes its lure of blue in the sun, but there is no response: no boat puts out from the quay, nor is there heard the answer to the call—the rhyme of twelve swinging oars chanting in their rowlocks.

Probably the most interesting relic in Port Royal is Fort Charles, erected in the reign of Charles II. It is a stiff old veteran of a fort, built for the most part of sun-faded bricks. A ramp leads up to the main gateway, over which is a regal coat of arms. Inside the stronghold, and secluded from the world by the ponderous wall, are some officers' quarters and a paved court. This court is so white that when the sun falls upon it, it is dazzling almost to blindness, while the shadows of the battlements on its flags are as black as ebony. Around it is disposed a quaint flower garden of such simplicity as would befit the courtyard of a monastery. Flowers of many colours, scarlet, yellow and blue, give a daintiness to the place which is unlooked for in a bastion; green weeds crop up among the stones, creepers loll over the wall and drop down on the other side, while more than one of the gun embrasures are hidden by bushes. It appears to be a favourite haunt of birds. Many green lizards, too, flit over the coral-coloured brick walls, stopping abruptly now and then as if they were listening to sounds inaudible to men.

On one wall bounding the courtyard is a marble tablet with this inscription:

IN THIS PLACE
DWELT
HORATIO NELSON
YOU WHO TREAD HIS FOOTPRINTS
REMEMBER HIS GLORY.

In a corner of the place is an old guard-room with heavy beams in the ceiling. A little stair opens out of it upon a paved platform which runs just within the seaward parapet. This stone

walk is called "Nelson's quarter-deck," for here he paced to and fro, watching for the French fleet which was hourly expected to attack Port Royal. It was in 1779 when Nelson was in command of Fort Charles. He was then just twenty-one years of age. The time was one of great anxiety in Jamaica, as the enemy's fleet was reported to be of immense strength, while the garrison holding this outpost was by comparison insignificant.[1] In one angle of the fort is a little shy entry or sally-port, leading to a stone stair. Over the arch of the gateway are the arms of the great admiral painted in sumptuous colours. This is the stair which led to Nelson's quarters.

Nelson had a later experience of Port Royal. He returned here in 1780, after the San Juan River expedition, so prostrated by dysentery that he had to be carried ashore in his cot. He was taken to the lodging of a negress named Cuba Cornwallis. The prænomen "Cuba" indicated the market from whence she came (just as one would speak of Ceylon tea); the title "Cornwallis" was added when she received her freedom from slavery at the hands of the admiral of that name. She was a nurse with a great reputation, a clever and kindly old soul, who kept what would be now called a nursing home, for she had had many officers under her care.

This gracious flower-bedecked fortress is the last survivor of the Port Royal of ancient days. It has seen the town at the height of its tawdry glory; has seen it slink back again to the homely fisher village. It has heard the clamour of revelry rise above the bustling streets. It has heard the volley of guns that welcomed the captive plate ships from the Main, as well as the tolling of the chapel bell for many a thousand of dead men. Under the shelter of its walls pirates have plotted at night, while possibly in its mess room Morgan the buccaneer, red and boisterous, has called for "a health to the King." Unmoved, unscathed it passed through the hideous earthquake of 1692, when the whole of the town around it was buried in ruin. Unmoved it has witnessed the great catastrophe of 1907, for while the mighty

[1] The attack by the French was never made.

forts which have supplanted it were crumpled up like a child's castle on the sands, this genial old place of many memories has been left undisturbed.[1]

Of the town of Port Royal—the pirates' Babylon—there is practically no trace remaining. In its place stands a village of narrow streets, shaded by picturesque grey houses of wood. Some have spacious balconies and verandahs, while not a few are decorated by handsome carvings after the old manner—the work of men who graved the figure-heads of ships. There are many tiny yards and gardens, as well as paved alleys, which seem to withdraw themselves from the gaze of men. Brown nets hanging along a paling, and a pair of mariner's trousers asprawl in the sun on a hibiscus bush, suggest that some at least of the inhabitants follow the calling of fishermen. The rest appear to be living in what is called "close retirement." It is a faded, disconsolate townlet, respectable almost to melancholy. If it has been too full of "evil and mischief" in the past, it is now certainly repenting in dust and ashes.

It still possesses a beautiful old court-house, the *insigne* of its better days. The quaint building has an arcade on either side of it, and a roof covered with shingles. The earthquake has shaken down the front wall, thereby revealing a curved staircase of great solemnity, fashioned in dark wood, which mounts to a landing, where are sober official doors which have been unceremoniously thrown wide open.

[1] The only effect of the recent earthquake was a slight crack in one of its walls.

LX.

TOM BOWLING'S CHANTRY.

THE most human building in the town of Port Royal is the old church. Viewed from the outside it is small, insignificant and ugly, being little more than a cube of plaster standing in a disintegrated graveyard. Its outward ugliness is due to the fact that it has been "restored," and that the work has been done with as much ruthlessness as if it had been a fourteenth-century church in England. A tablet announces that it was rebuilt in the years 1725–6.

Within it is happily but little disturbed, owing, it may be supposed, to a fortunate lack of funds. Still left standing are the old-fashioned pews and benches where many generations of sailor men, "grummets" and "younkers," have sat and prayed to be preserved "from the dangers of the sea and from the violence of the enemy." At one end is a grand wooden singing gallery, held up by stout pillars. Its front is very elaborately and strangely carved in the Spanish style, the surface of the work being toned down by age to a rich port-wine colour. The walls are covered with memorials and tablets of every type and period. They tell one ever-repeated story—the story of men lost in gales or killed in action, of men who sank with their ships, and above all of the host who were sacrificed as a tribute to the Minotaur of yellow fever. How many thousands of British sailors and soldiers lie buried in the sands around Port Royal no chronicle can tell. Those whose names still linger on the walls of the ancient church are but a mere fraction of the multitude.

The monuments are erected by widows, by old shipmates, by sisters and daughters. There is one to three little middies

who died of yellow fever in 1820. The tablet that keeps green the memory of their brief lives is placed in the church by their captain, who would have found his ship grown strangely quiet after the three small coffins were taken ashore. There is a memorial to a lieutenant aged forty-nine, which will serve to show how slow promotion might be half a century ago. It is to a certain Lieutenant Bainbridge, of H.M. schooner *Pickle*, who perished of yellow fever in 1846, and is erected by his shipmates. Another tablet tells of a dismal voyage as well as of a doctor and his patients. It reads thus :—"Thomas Graham, M.D., and sixteen seamen of H.M. ship *Pantaloon*, who died of fever between Belize and Jamaica, 1847." A remarkable monument exists to the memory of Lieutenant Stapleton, who was killed in 1754 by the bursting of a gun. The carving in white marble representing the catastrophe was considered by many to be an achievement until Froude disposed of the same by declaring it to be "bad art."

Port Royal Church is the church of the sailor of bygone days, the seamen's chantry where prayers may be offered for the peace of their restless souls. Among the many inscriptions upon its walls might well appear the opening lines of Dibdin's sea song :

> "Here, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom Bowling,
> The darling of our crew ;
> No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
> For death has broached him to."

As befits a sailors' chapel it is close to the sea, so near that the sound of the waves on the beach can be heard any service time when the wind is southerly.

What a muster of men these fateful walls have seen ! Here, in the best pew, stands the staid captain, "in a coat of the regular Rodney cut, broad skirts, long waist and stand-up collar ;" his costume being completed by white kerseymere breeches and long boots with "coal-scuttle tops." His lips never move through the service. He opens his book always at one place, never turning a leaf. It is the place in the volume where lies a book-marker made by a daughter long years dead ; for the old man's

Sunday service, the year through, consists of a worshipful communion with memories of the past.

Here too is the mahogany-faced bo'sun, around whose visage is a fringe of hair like a mane, and at the nape of whose neck hangs a queue which might be made of a rope's end. He has a voice like a fog-horn, a reputation for musical gifts and for great powers of song. He will never begin a verse of a hymn until he has first drawn the back of his hand across his mouth, as if he were about to take a satisfying draught.

Then there are the middies, looking very trim as becomes boys fresh from home. They are apt to be pale-faced, and to seem a little too frail for the giant-limbed company they find themselves among. They wear dirks by their sides, and carry in their hands the Prayer Books their mothers gave them.

The body of the congregation is made up of a rough crowd of reckless-looking, masterful men. Most of them wear short jackets and white trousers, the latter being maintained in place by a wisp of bunting or a strip of sail cloth. Some hold shiny black hats in their fists, while most of them drag a lock of hair respectfully over their foreheads as they enter the aisle. They are strong in coloured handkerchiefs, in large ear-rings and in ponderous boots. They are shy and awkward as they lurch in at the door, are inclined to huddle together, and, when their faces are hidden in the attitude of prayer, surreptitious jets of tobacco juice may be heard to strike the boards. Heads come close together under the shelter of the pew wall; whisperings may at times be exchanged, and these may rise into angry murmurs or even to sounds of open wrangling, until at last it comes to be known that two of the worshippers are rolling on the floor, fighting like hyænas and nearly bursting the panels of the pew with their backs. They are removed with as much decorum as the circumstances will permit, and the subsequent fight in the graveyard is listened to with rapt interest and much nudging of elbows by a critical congregation.

Few in the assembly can read, but all can sing, and sing they do till the windows shake. The coxswain waiting by the boats

on the slip must many a time have had the quiet of his watch broken in upon by the roar of the "Old Hundredth" pouring forth from the church half a mile away. It was well perhaps that they could not read, for there was ever before them in the little church the dread writing on the wall, a script which told of far-off disaster as well as of that shadow of death which left, Sunday after Sunday, ever-widening gaps in the benches.

Let it be hoped that, after the storm and stress of their rugged lives, they all found at last—as did Tom Bowling—that never clouded land of "pleasant weather."

LXI

COLON.

THE homeward journey commences at Jamaica, being made in the mail steamer which comes down from New York. The ship travels eastwards along the Spanish Main, its earliest port of call being Colon on the Isthmus of Panama. The first view of the famous Spanish Main is not disappointing. The steamer heads for a wide, green bay of many creeks, the low shores of which are edged by cocoa-nut palms. In the background is a far-reaching ridge covered with jungle. The trees upon its summit stand out against the skyline, while to the left are dim mountains of great height, the western end of the Andes. The country seems so luxuriant and so tempting that it can be understood why Columbus the Dreamer, as he sailed along its shores, felt assured that he had come upon the Land of Ophir whence King Solomon drew his wealth of gold.

There is little to suggest the Land of Ophir about the town of Colon as it appears at the present day. The town lies on the margin of a sodden swamp, the mud shore of which has been trodden into the semblance of honest earth by generations of human feet. It is a small place, being composed of one long street from the back of which minor streets come off at intervals. These struggle for varying distances towards the swamp, and then drop off in despair among miscellaneous rubbish. The general plan of the town, therefore, is that of a discarded comb with broken and irregular teeth.

The houses are, for the most part, wooden shanties of the dirtiest, among which drinking bars and cafés are notable. There

are incongruous, indefinite shops kept by Chinamen, and store-houses filled with such a medley of untidy goods as would suggest the hoard of an ancient and unmethodical buccaneer. The unkempt roadway is filthy and full of mud holes. Fortunately the railway runs along the main street and so presents, when trains are not passing, a convenient promenade. The place is hot, sickly and dispirited, a rendezvous of dejected loafers. Any backwood settlement in the Far West may be more rudimentary, but it would at least be alive with vigour, hope and determination. Here there is only a yawning apathy, a state of desponding anæmia.

There is a look of the neglected lazar-house about the spot, and certainly the smell of the same; for it is doubtful if any place is more fetid for its size than is this well-known seaport. Every city has its slums, but Colon is a slum without a city. It has the appearance, moreover, of being a temporary town erected to meet some emergency or calamity. It is a town, too, which seems to have never grown up, but to be still in a most unwholesome pseudo-infancy. In this respect it is like a poor, dwarfed cretin, who, although he may be fifty years of age, is yet a child in stature and in speech, beardless, and apt to spend the day playing marbles.

In remarkable contrast to this comfortless, unhuman haunt of men is the adjacent American settlement of Cristobal, on the Canal Zone, where are charming houses, the most perfect cleanliness and order, as well as the latest developments of sanitary science.

The inhabitants of Colon are mostly negroes, with a few brown or sallow men of very complex pedigree. The national costume consists of frayed trousers, a buttonless shirt and a slouch hat. There is scarcely a woman to be seen in the place. While the squalor of the town is not to be excused, there are some grounds for the melancholia which seems to pervade its streets. The town is low-lying, and the fermenting swamp at the back of it does not make for cheerfulness. Then the wet season at Colon lasts for eight months out of the twelve, the annual rainfall reaching as high

as 155 inches. Whether wet or dry it is always hot, not with a keen fiery sun, but with a steamy, enervating, invalid heat which carries little joy with it.

Moreover death comes very often to Colon, so often that the place has been known as "the town of flags at half-mast." The burial ground is on Monkey Hill, where, during the time of epidemics from thirty to forty victims have been disposed of every day. This hill contains very many thousands of graves, the resting-places of Spaniards, French and English, of Negroes, Panama natives, Chinese and the Mulattoes of the Main. Probably there is no such burial ground in any other part of the earth. Those who have realised this have of late years changed the name of the height from Monkey Hill to Mount Hope. Dr. Nelson in his account of Panama[1] gives a local doctor's description of the seasons at Colon. That practitioner recognised the following divisions, viz. "the wet season from April to December, when the people die of yellow fever in four to five days, and the dry or healthy season from December to April, when they die of pernicious fever in twenty-four to thirty-six hours."

Such is the Land of Ophir of Christopher Columbus. Such is the end of the Gold Road.

[1] *Five Years at Panama*: London, 1891.

LXII.

THE GOLD ROAD.

THE puny strip of land which separates the two great oceans of the world looks on the map so slender as to suggest that the Colossus of Rhodes might have stood astride of it, with a foot in either sea. It is a mere causeway a few square miles in width, yet no spot on the earth of its size can rival it in interest. Placed but a few degrees from the Equator, cursed by a deadly climate, and narcotised by a sweltering, enervating air, it has yet witnessed the most sturdy displays of human energy and aggression. It has been the scene of fights innumerable, of desperate ventures and of heroic daring. More than that, it has been the arena of enterprises unparalleled in magnitude, and can boast to exhibit at this day the greatest structural work ever attempted by man.

Although the land is poor and profitless, being little more than swamp and jungle, it has been sought by eager thousands, and has borne upon its rough trails wealth in untold millions, gold enough, indeed, for a world's ransom. Upon this pestilential waste more money has been bestowed than would suffice to build a dozen stately cities, and yet it is a land where none make a home, a land without children, where the whole road from sea to sea is paved with dead men's bones.

It was from a hill on the Isthmus that Vasco Nuñez de Balboa discovered the Pacific Ocean.[1] From a like height Sir Francis Drake gazed upon that alluring sea—the first Englishman whose eyes had ever been greeted by a sight of it.[2]

[1] In 1513. [2] In 1573.

It was at Nombre de Dios on the Isthmus that Drake first made himself "redoubtable to the Spaniards," while the most famous deeds of the Buccaneers and their most venturesome assaults belong to the annals of this fever-stricken land.

Across the Isthmus was carried year after year, partly by mule trains and partly by river, the incredible wealth of Peru. It was in the store-houses of Nombre de Dios that were piled up the gold and the precious stones of which the ancient empire of Mexico had been ransacked. It seemed as if the stream of gold could never cease, for after Mexico had been stripped, and after the mines of Peru had been dug bare, gold came hither from California. Thousands of pounds' worth of it were brought down to Panama, and thence carried across the Isthmus by the same Gold Road that the Spanish pioneers had made, carried in the same manner too—half-way by mule pack along the Cruces road, and half-way by the Chagres River. In 1855 the Trans-isthmian Railway from Colon to Panama was completed.

During all these toiling years, Death has stood in the narrow crossing and has there exacted toll from whomsoever passed by the way. The loss of life involved in the construction of the little line of rail was alone appalling. The iron road moved across the land like the car of Juggernaut, crushing to death all living things it came upon. It has been said, and probably with truth, that every tie or sleeper beneath the rails cost a human life. Enriquez de Guzman, who came into these parts in 1534, asserts that out of every hundred men who went to Peru for gold, eighty never returned again. In like manner, during the gold craze in California, the number who met with death on the Isthmus, within sight of the sea that was to carry them and their nuggets home, would have filled many a happy town. Last of all, during the construction of the canal by the French Company, men died yearly not in hundreds but in thousands. In truth there is no burial ground comparable with this on the face of the earth, for the dead lie thicker than the trees.

The town of Panama stands about nine degrees north of the Equator. The Isthmus at its narrowest part is from thirty-one

to thirty-three miles wide in a direct line. The railway, running as it does obliquely and with many turns, covers nearly forty-eight miles in its traverse. Extending along the Isthmus and parallel to the coasts is an irregular range of hills, a dwindling tentacle of the Andes. These heights are nearer to the Pacific than to the Atlantic Coast, for the Culebra Pass, through which both the railway and the canal are taken, is within ten miles of Panama. The country to the south of the mountains differs much—except in the particular of unhealthiness—from the land on the north. At Panama the annual rainfall is about 75 inches, while at Colon it may mount to 155 inches. On the Pacific shore the tide rises 14 feet, while on the Atlantic side the rise is but 14 inches.

There are several rivers on the Isthmus, but the one of most interest is the Rio Chagres, which enters the Atlantic a little to the west of Colon. Both the railway and the canal follow it from the hills to the sea. It is a savage and reckless river uncurbable, untamable. During the dry season it is merely a sullen, fever-laden stream; but in the time of the rains it breaks out into a maniacal torrent that sweeps to perdition whatever comes in its way, tearing up trees as if they were reeds, and bursting from its banks as if they were walls of sand. It has risen in a day from twenty to forty feet, and when the mad mood is on it, it must needs be left to rend, to howl and to destroy as it likes. The makers of the canal have surmounted many and great difficulties, but they have yet to make terms with the Chagres River.

The stream, when sufficiently placid, is navigable for small boats as far as a village called Cruces. Cruces, whose ancient name was Venta Cruz, is about fifteen miles from Panama as the crow flies, and about eighteen by the road. Many a band of pirates have crept up this river to Cruces. It was by the Rio Chagres that Morgan's buccaneers made their crossing in the famous raid which led to the sacking of old Panama. For many years the Gold Road was by way of the mule track from Panama to Cruces, and thence by boats to the Northern sea. It was by

this route that the gold from California reached the east coast of America.

This river and the Cruces trail have seen a great company of adventurers, eager and radiant with hope, pass to the Pacific, and a much diminished company wend their way back again. Among the latter have been jubilant men hugging bags of gold dust, men who could say that "their fortunes were made," and there were others with empty pockets, dejected and in rags, who brought back with them nothing but the hard memory of disaster. Death took toll from them all, from the wealthy as well as from the shirtless, for the bag of gold was no talisman. Many who had passed the river and gained the sea, who stood even upon the deck of the home-going ship, felt the bony hand laid on their shoulders, and knew that the fever had tracked them down and had seized them at last.

The town of Cruces, the town of the woful past, can never have been an enviable place of residence. At one time it possessed large store-houses, buildings of stone, ample barracks, a monastery, and a church of some pretence. When it was in this state of glory, it became famous as the scene of Drake's attack upon the mule train from Panama. Of peace and of reasonable quiet it has known nothing. It was periodically stormed by Indians, raided by buccaneers, and was burnt down at less certain intervals. In every trans-isthmian enterprise the destruction of Cruces became an inevitable feature. As Morgan approached it on his memorable expedition the Spaniards themselves set fire to the town, so that the pirates should find nothing in the place but some carefully poisoned wine.

Cruces sank lower as years went on, until it became little more than a botch of shanties, of stinking mule sheds, and of blaring rum shops, a spot in whose festering streets one could expect to find, on any morning after the treasure convoy had come in, the puffed-up body of the muleteer who had drunk himself to death or the corpse of a seaman with a knife sticking in his back, and his belt and pack missing. It is now "a poor, miserable place," composed of the dirty huts of a few negroes, half-breeds and

Indians. Of the many routes across the Isthmus, that by Cruces and the Chagres River remained to the last the favourite of the pirate and the smuggler.

It would seem that the earliest Gold Road, "the roughly paved road" that Pizarro made, went from coast to coast by way of Cruces. It is still called the Royal Road. In Drake's time the treasure came from Panama to Nombre de Dios, a poor little harbour far to the east of Colon. In later years (for example in Dampier's day) the Gold Road reached the Atlantic at Porto Bello, a haven between Colon and Nombre de Dios.

No matter whither it went there was no road like the Gold Road, none so fear-compelling, so hemmed about with terrors, so haunted by alarms. The feet of Dante never followed a path more full of dread. It was a narrow way, roughly paved. It shunned the open, slinking through the jungle where the shadows were deepest, climbing in furtive zigzags up the hillside, creeping like a bravo along the river bank. There were bleached bones by the wayside, skeletons of mules, skeletons of men. The snake loved to bask in the little sun that shone upon it. The air above the road was hot and vapid, and thick with deadly flies.

The mule trains were often of immense length as the crossing was made at infrequent periods. In the van came a troop of Spanish soldiers, gaunt, weather-worn men, with the fear of the road in their eyes, fear of an ambush of Indians, fear of the forest outcast, fear above all of English pirates. Then with much clattering of hoofs and jingling of bells—for there is companionship in noise—came the mules with their packs. The rough goods went first, then the silver; in the centre were the gold boxes, while in the rear followed bundles of miscellaneous loot. None could tarry by the way. It was a road that knew neither rest nor sleep. It was ever on and on and on. Through heat, through rain, over swamp, over stones, the cry was ever the same, "Press on."

The crack of the slave-driver's whip could be heard along the line to keep hoofs and feet from lagging. One sick man, as the fever creeps over him, lets his head and arms drop upon the pack

THE GOLD ROAD OUTSIDE OLD PANAMA.

Showing the rough paving.

of his beast. A slash from a whip leaves a line of blood across his back and wakens him for a moment. The head falls on the pack again; the feet move still because they are ever to move, for there is no halting on the Gold Road. The whip cuts another long wound in the skin, but the slave now feels it not; the feet move a little longer; they stumble, then stop, and the dying man rolls to the ground. The procession never falters, never swerves an inch. Fifty mules trample him into the mud; their hoofs slide off his chest and his face. A dozen muleteers walk over him as they would over a hummock, with just a moment of wonder as to who he was. Then come the vultures, the rats and the ants, and there is one more skeleton by the Gold Road.

It was a precious burden that the mule trains bore. It was the harvest of robbery and murder, the sheaves reaped by treachery and torture, a devil's crop. Every grain of gold came from a crucible whose furnace was fed with human lives. Every load bore some contribution from wretches who had been either worked to death or beaten to death. It was an Argosy of cruelty and greed. Costly as it was, none seem to have been made the richer by all the wealth that came by this pitiless way.

LXIII.

SOME WHO FOLLOWED THE GOLD ROAD.

In July 1572, Francis Drake, after elaborate preparations, descended upon the town of Nombre de Dios with the intention of seizing the treasure which was collected there, awaiting the arrival of the Plate Fleet from Spain. The assault was daring and brilliant, but it ended in failure. Drake was wounded, and although his men escaped with their lives they carried with them to the boats neither silver nor gold. Drake vanished after the attack as suddenly as he had appeared. He hid himself in one of the secret harbours, where he kept his stores, on the Atlantic coast of the Isthmus. In this solitude he planned an attack upon the mule train which periodically crossed the Isthmus with treasure from Panama to Nombre de Dios. His men had suffered heavily from fever, so Drake landed on the coast, some way to the east of Colon, with only eighteen of his crew but with a company of thirty faithful Maroons.

After many days' tramping through the jungle they came to the high ground which lies between the two seas. This was in February 1573. The Maroon chief led Drake with much solemnity to a certain lofty hill, on the peak of which was a "goodly and great high tree." Steps had been cut in the trunk of this king of the forest and Drake was invited to climb to the summit. This he did. From the height he saw to the north "the Atlantic Ocean whence now we came," and to the south, some twenty miles away, a new sea glistening in the sun. In this wise was the Pacific first revealed to the eyes of England. Drake gazed his fill at the wondrous sheet of water, and then and

there "besought Almighty God of His goodness to give him life and leave to sail once in an English ship in that sea." This prayer was answered and in five years' time.

Moving southwards the party of pirates and Indians reached at last to that grand stretch of park-like land which lies at the back of Panama city. They crept across the open grass downs, crawling on hands and knees, until they gained the shelter of a wood within a league of the town. From this safe point "our captain did behold and view the most of all that fair city, discerning the large street which lieth directly from the sea into the land, south and north." He would discern also near to the shore the square tower of the cathedral, which tower stands by the sea to this day. Drake sent a spy into the town, and learnt that the convoy was starting that very night for Venta Cruz. They were indeed already busy harnessing the mules in the market-place. The treasure train was to be exceptionally rich and heavy, the spy was told.

Drake at once turned back and hurried for the Gold Road so as to intercept the convoy before it reached Venta Cruz, as Cruces was then called. He halted by the edge of the track about two leagues to the south of the little town, where he arranged an ambush, hiding his company in the long grass. Here they crouched; every heart beating with eagerness, while now and then in the dark a cherry-red glow would illumine the face of a man who blew on his fuse to keep it alight. The pirates had not been lying down for more than an hour or so when the stillness of the forest was broken by the jingle of mule bells. The treasure train was coming.

"Drake had given strict orders that no man should show himself, or as much as budge from his station. Yet one of the men, of the name of Robert Pike, now disobeyed those orders. 'Having drunken too much aqua-vitæ without water,' he forgot himself. He rose from his place in the grass, enticing a Cimmeroon with him, and crept up close to the road, 'with intent to have shown his forwardness on the foremost mules.' Almost immediately a cavalier came trotting past from Venta Cruz upon

a fine horse, with a little page running at the stirrup. As he trotted by, Robert Pike 'rose up to see what he was.' The Cimmeroon promptly pulled him down and sat upon him; but his promptness came too late to save the situation. All the English had put their shirts over their other apparel, 'that we might be sure to know our own men in the pell mell of the night.' The Spanish cavalier had glanced in Robert Pike's direction, and had seen a figure rising from the grass 'half all in white' and very conspicuous. He had heard of Drake's being on the coast, and at once came to the conclusion that that arch-pirate had found his way through the woods to reward himself for his disappointment at Nombre de Dios. He was evidently a man of great presence of mind. He put spurs to his horse, and galloped off down the road, partly to escape the danger, but partly also to warn the treasure train, the bells of which were now clanging loudly at a little distance from the ambuscade."[1]

Still the mules came on, and were soon abreast of the crouching men. A whistle was blown, and the sailors with a cheer jumped out into the track. They seized the affrighted beasts, pulled off their packs and ripped them open, only to find, to their utter dismay, nothing but wool and dried provender. The Spanish cavalier had done well. He had hurried the food mules to the front, and, while Drake's seamen were turning over worthless sacks and clouting bewildered muleteers, the gold and silver and the cases of jewels were being galloped back to Panama.

This is not the place to follow the adventure further, nor to tell how Drake that very night fell upon Cruces and took it, nor how he got some little loot there, and after a most painful journey reached his boats.

Before returning to England the persistent buccaneer once more visited the Gold Road, laying an ambush between Cruces and Nombre de Dios. Robert Pike had no doubt been kept without drink on that occasion, for the English seized the mule train by absolute surprise, and with it more gold and silver than they could carry. So the voyage proved to be "rich and gain-

[1] *On the Spanish Main*, by John Masefield, page 65: London, 1906.

full," for which good ending, says the pious chronicler, there must be ascribed "to God alone the glory."

One of the most interesting of the many crossings of the Isthmus was that accomplished by Dampier in 1681. It is interesting because Dampier was a ready writer, who left behind him a minute account of the journey in a book modestly referred to as "this plain Piece of mine." Dampier was the son of a tenant farmer of East Coker, near Yeovil, and at the age of seventeen was apprenticed to a master mariner who hailed from Weymouth. After sundry experiences the farmer's boy found himself drawn by the magic of the West Indies as steel is drawn by a magnet. He tried logwood cutting for a time, but, finding that occupation dull, he joined the Buccaneers, with whom he lived for some nine years.

The career of a pirate would hardly seem to be conducive to sustained literary work, yet Dampier wrote his best book while on board a pirate ship. He would often have to leave a chapter unfinished in order to join in the looting of a town, or the boarding of a Spanish merchantman, or the shortening of sail in a breeze. Living as he did among ruined lumbermen, cut-throats, and chronically uproarious seamen, he had little encouragement for study; yet he kept up his orderly notes upon natural history, his accounts of winds and tides, of the habits of natives, and of the geography of the parts he visited with pious persistence. One can picture him sitting on the deck, in the shadow of a gun, busy with his inkhorn and paper, but with his cutlass and pistols handy, sketching that excellent map of Panama which he fondly describes as "a particular Draught of my own composure." In this pursuit he may have been distracted a little by a drunken chorus bawled out from the forecastle, and be still more disturbed when a tipsy pirate stumbled across his outstretched feet.

He kept his manuscript, or "copy," in "a large Joint of Bambo," which, he says, "I stopt at both ends, closing it with Wax, so as to keep out any water. In this I preserved my Journal and other Writings from being wet, tho' I was often forced to swim."

At the period of his life with which we are now concerned Dampier was pirating in the Pacific with that execrable scoundrel Bartholomew Sharp, the ending of whose voyage at Barbados has been already described (page 51). The author and certain of his comrades, "being altogether dissatisfied with Sharp's conduct," resolved to leave him and return by way of the Isthmus to paths of peace. The party consisted of forty-four white men, three Indians, and five slaves. They had with them a good deal of loot; for, in spite of Sharp's objectionable manners and habits, the expedition had been very profitable. They were indeed weighed down with pieces of eight in bags, with parcels of silk, and with miscellaneous weapons and curiosities, after the manner of the knight in "Alice in Wonderland."

They landed at the head of the Gulf of St. Miguel and struck across the Isthmus in a north-easterly direction. It was a fearful march, full of dull misery. In the first place it was the rainy season of the year, while in addition to this there was great difficulty in finding efficient guides. The fee for a guide was a hatchet, but those who obtained this reward did uncommonly little for their services. The party at last came across one Indian who was reputed to have an intimate knowledge of the district, but unfortunately this expert was in a surly mood, and indeed gave very impertinent answers to the questions put to him. He was not only rude but positively obstructive. The pirates "tempted him with Beads, Money, Hatchets, Matcheats or long Knives; but nothing would work on him." He regarded the display of wealth with as much contempt as a cabman regards a shilling when presented for a three-mile fare.

This incorruptible native had however a wife, while among the pirates there chanced to be a man who had some knowledge of the female temperament. This mariner, with a look at the disdainful Indian, drew something very carefully out of his sea-bag. It was an unusual object to be found among a buccaneer's luggage, for when it was unfolded and shaken out it proved to be a "Sky-coloured Petticoat." This garment the seaman, with a confident grin, popped over the head of the guide's wife and fastened it

round her waist with the deftness of a man who had had experience. The giggling lady "was so much pleased with the Present that she immediately began to chatter to her Husband, and soon brought him into a better humour."

Through the virtue of the sky-coloured petticoat the weary pirates were led for many days. Even under such inspired pilotage the journey was a tramp along a circle in Purgatory. The wretched freebooters stumbled through swamps like the Slough of Despond; they tore their way through tangled woods, yard by yard; they fought with the jungle as men battle with fire; they ploughed through mud up to their waists; they clambered up slopes of green slime, clinging on with their nails. Their bodies became infested with ticks, their faces so swollen by the stings of flies that they could hardly see, and when the rain ceased in the day, the sun burnt them with a steaming heat. Often and often they could find no shelter for the night, nor could they, owing to the downpour, light a fire. They must needs lie on the sponge-like ground, which was so sodden that any movement of the uneasy limbs was accompanied by the wheezing of water and the bubbling up of gas.

So impenetrable was the jungle that on one day they only advanced two miles, cutting their way all the time through a web of brambles, "ropes" and creepers. Their average progress during the whole journey was five miles a day, for in this drear wandering they travelled no less than 110 miles, and it took them twenty-three days to accomplish it. They lost their way a hundred times, reeling about like drunken men. On one day Dampier estimates that they crossed the same river thirty times, sometimes by swimming, sometimes by wading up to their armpits, in the futile search for a few yards of open path.

On the morning of the eighth day they came to a river so deep and swift that none dared venture to cross it. "At length," writes Dampier, in the journal he kept in the "Joint of Bambo," "we concluded to send one Man over with a Line, who should hale over all our things first and then get the Men over." This being agreed on, one George Gayny took the end of the line and,

making it fast about his neck, plunged into the torrent. Unfortunately the line became entangled and Gayny was turned over on his back; whereupon the men on the bank threw the rest of the line into the river, hoping thus to clear it. It did drift clear, but the rush of water was terrific; Gayny was weakened by the tramp, and moreover he carried a bag on his back containing 300 dollars in silver. Two hands rose for a moment out of the brown whirlpool and Gayny vanished.

Some stragglers came upon him a few days later, lying dead on the shore of a little creek, his arms outstretched, his eyelids closed, and with the bag of coins still fast to his back. They themselves were too spent to think of money; so they left poor Gayny and his bag untouched and "meddled not with any of it."

Hardest to bear, on this fearsome journey, was the want of food. They nearly died of starvation. Often enough they "had no sort of Food for the Belly." For days they were reduced to eating Macaw berries and such-like fruit. Now and then they got plantains and yams, and even a bird or two, or a wild pig; but their happiest day was when they shot three fat monkeys and were able to cook them.

On the twenty-second day, to their infinite comfort, they caught sight of the sea. By this time their clothes had nearly rotted off their bodies; their feet were bleeding and tied up in rags; some were lame, many were sick; all were covered with sores and ulcers due to falls, or scratches, or the bites of insects. "Our Thighs are stript with wading through so many Rivers," writes the pirate author, "and not a Man of us but wisht the Journey at an End." They came out on the coast by the Mulatas Islands, and were happy in finding there a French pirate ship, whose commander—one Captain Tristian—took all the poor bedraggled company on board.

It remains to be mentioned that with this distressful land party was their medical adviser, a surgeon named Wafer. How he came to find himself on a pirate ship is not known. During the

crossing of the Isthmus he received a grievous wound of the leg through the accidental explosion of some gunpowder. Being unable to walk, he was left behind with the Indians to rest and get well. So impressed were the simple savages by his professional abilities that they could not make enough of him. It is indeed probable that no practitioner has ever been so embarrassed by the attentions of grateful patients. As a mark of their esteem they removed the few rags of clothing that still adhered to his body and painted him, from head to foot, in brilliant colours, red, blue, yellow, and green. With this radiant testimonial upon him he, in due course, joined his shipmates. They saw walk down to the beach a nude figure decorated like a harlequin, and attended by obsequious Indians. It was not until he lifted up his voice that the pirates recognised in this strange being their much-respected ship's doctor.

With the doctor came another member of the party who had been left behind with him when he was laid up by the accident. This was a Mr. Richard Jobson, a gentleman who seems to have been as much out of place on a pirate craft as was the sky-coloured petticoat. Mr. Jobson was a person of learning, a Divinity student, who had been an assistant in a chemist's shop in London. What led him to abandon the making of pills and powders in order to go a-pirating is a mystery, especially as a filibuster's cabin is no school of theology.

He took with him across the Isthmus, in addition to his share of the loot, a Greek Testament, portions from which he was in the habit of translating aloud to the pirates when they were in a mood for displays of scholarship. It is probable that on occasions, when the party were squatting in a swamp after an arduous day, Mr. Jobson would relieve the tedium of the bivouac by elucidating especially difficult passages for the benefit of the damp buccaneers.

Unhappily the poor Greek scholar, when he reached the brink of the sea, was already dying, and indeed in a few days he did die. One may imagine that as he lay delirious in his cot he would still

hold in his hand the weather-soddened Greek Testament, marking with his finger the place of some verse in the rendering of which he was most proud. As some kindly pirate fanned him with a leaf, he would fancy himself back again in the cool, sweetly scented shop in the familiar street, handing sachets over the counter to gentle-eyed English girls.

A SQUARE IN PANAMA CITY.

LXIV.

OVER THE ISTHMUS TO PANAMA.

THE Trans-isthmian Railway is well managed; the carriages are comfortable, and the journey from Colon to Panama occupies about two hours and a half. For some few miles beyond Colon the line passes through a dismal swamp, on the far edge of which stands a low hill of red earth. This is Monkey Hill, or Mount Hope, a height covered from base to summit by many thousand of graves. There is consistency in this first view of the land, for the swamp and the cemetery are very characteristic of the Isthmus.

The country generally through which the line passes is wild, rough and picturesque, swamp and jungle, jungle and swamp, with here a sweep of prairie and there a hill. It is a tangled, impenetrable land, ever hot and steamy, and any who scan as they pass its knotted forests, its trap-like ravines and its oozing bogs, will understand the horrors of Dampier's tramp, and why he so earnestly "wisht the Journey at an End."

The line leads by the Canal cutting so that a good idea of the features of that stupendous work may be gained *en route*. Many camps are passed, many clearings in the jungle, many clumps of negro hovels, many mushroom towns full of trim, well-built houses and "hotels," of "restaurants" and stores, of Chinese shanties and immense, loud-echoing workshops. In many places the forest has been cleared by fire, so that the place looks desolate. Through the disturbed solitude run miles of rails, tracking in all directions, and on each thread of the web are a puffing engine and trucks. There are waggons by the thousand, leagues of oil pipes and of pipes feeding the drills, mountainous slopes of dirt, a forest of

cranes, mammoth steam-shovels, columns of smoke, and the ever-present sound of steam whistles, of heavy hammers and of ringing anvils. The mass of discarded and crumbling machinery seen by the roadside, as well as the host of overturned "dumping-cars" are remarkable. In one siding are some thirty French locomotives in orderly line which have never been used, and which are now almost buried in the jungle. Bushes hide the wheels and make arbours of the coal tenders, while creepers climb around the funnels as around the trunks of trees.

Of the great engineering work itself it is unnecessary to speak, for its details are familiar to most. It is so marvellous an undertaking that it quite overshadows another work on the Isthmus which is not less marvellous, but which attracts no attention, and that is the clearing of the country of disease, and the converting of this deadly, pestilential land into a healthy settlement. This enterprise, undertaken by the American sanitary authorities, has been accomplished by Colonel Gorgas (a surgeon in the United States Army) and his staff. Colonel Gorgas is responsible for the sanitation of the Canal Zone. He has under him no less than ninety-one medical men, and a *personnel* of over 3000 subordinates. To his undying credit he has made this most unpromising strip of land a model of applied hygiene, and has shown, on a scale never before paralleled, what preventive medicine, under an enlightened and liberal direction, is capable of doing.

Within about six miles of Colon, near a place called Gatun, the traveller by the railway will obtain his first glimpse of the Chagres River. A sight of the river is afforded many times during the next twenty-four miles of the journey, for the line keeps close to the stream, crossing it indeed at San Pablo. It is a sinister, evil-looking river, a sullen, still river whose waters have the shifty yellow-green tint of a snake's eye and the smell of fever. It has cut a deep channel for itself, so deep that in places it is almost hidden by the bush. Its banks are of brown earth, bare and slimy, as if nothing could live within touch of the uneasy current. Along its sides are hosts of dead trees which it has torn

up in its fury, and which are not only dead but stripped bare, and bleached like skeletons. Here and there are dangerous shoals of stones, malevolent pools, and beaches of rust-coloured mud.

In many a creek and on many a shelving bank is to be seen the Indian canoe, the dug-out, the *canoa* of old days; a poor, dull, blundering thing it is, for it belongs to the age of the stone hatchet. This is the boat in which the buccaneers crept up the stream to Cruces, with their fuses alight and their hangers in their hands. This is the craft in which the gold was paddled down to the sea, breathlessly, eagerly. The river is unchanged, its curves, its pools, its shallows are the same; the *piragua*, the native boat, is still the same. Let it be filled with a crew of sea-tanned men and a few Maroons, let the banks echo once more with their reckless laughter, and behold, there are Drake's men making their way up stream in search of treasure!

As the high ground is reached on the journey the country becomes more open and infinitely more beautiful. Such settlements as Gorgona, Matachin and Las Cascadas are charmingly situated. They are just to the north of the famous Culebra Pass. To the left of these stations certain pleasant hills are to be seen, from the highest of which Bilboa is said to have obtained his first view of the Pacific. To the left of Bas Obispo, just beyond Matachin, is the once famous town of Cruces, the Venta Cruz of the buccaneers. It is now merely a depressing hamlet lying out of sight of the railway.

From Culebra the line begins to drop towards the south, and every one is on the look out for a glimpse of the western sea. Panama lies upon a flat, at a spot where the ocean fills to its very brim a good green bay, a bay encircled by trees, a bay dotted with islands to temper the glare of the boundless mirror. There is a great fascination about this far-off view of the sea, but perhaps it conveys a disappointment to those who expect that some magic must illumine the face of this romantic ocean, and that its waters will be bluer, or clearer, or in some way more wonderful than any oceans that are. After all it has to be owned that it is only the sea.

Panama city is small, Spanish-looking and picturesque. Dampier was charmed with the view of it from the bay, and maintained that its many handsome buildings "altogether made one of the finest objects he did ever see." It was founded in 1673, after the destruction of Old Panama by Morgan the buccaneer, and has had since then many unquiet experiences. The streets are a little dingy, not conspicuous for neatness, and not free from smells. The houses, mostly of wood with wide balconies and verandahs, are dazzling with white paint and shaded, wherever possible, with palms. They possess the barred windows and heavy doors, as well as the drowsy courtyards, which mark the dwellings of the Spaniard.

The many narrow lanes in the city afford a pleasant refuge from the tropical sun, especially as at the end of most of them will be a glimpse of the sea. There are many modern buildings in Panama designed in accord with what is known as "the official colonial style." They are pretentious and unsightly enough, but at the same time the streets abound with old stone houses of great charm. There may be only fragments of these—an arched doorway, a wall of sturdy masonry, a dark entry, fragments of fine carving or a gracious balcony in stone worthy of Seville. There are curious little old-world squares, too, with a garish and untidy garden in the centre and a pale church at one end, marked by strange gables, a bell tower decorated with fantastic sculptures and endless saints in niches.

Some of the churches in the town, gorgeously built in a long-forgotten style, are singularly picturesque. The cathedral, erected in 1760, presents two florid towers and a façade which is a little over-elaborate and gaudy, and is not improved by much rain-streaked whitewash. The first church built in the city was that dedicated to San Felipe Neri. It stands in a narrow street, a severely plain building, over whose sole entrance is a shield with the inscription "San Felipe Neri, 1688." It has a quaint old tower and belfry. Its enormous door, studded heavily with brazen knobs, was intended to resist—as it has resisted—the attacks of marauders. It is evidently too a place of refuge, for

ONE OF THE OLD CHURCHES IN PANAMA CITY.

the simple lancet windows are recessed like the loopholes in a fortress, and are placed so high in the wall that none could possibly climb into them. Other fine churches are those of Santa Ana, Nuestra Señora de la Merced, and the ruined church of Santo Domingo. A great deal of the city wall, built in 1673, still exists along the sea front of the town, and very picturesque it is.

It is claimed that the streets of Panama present the most mixed population to be found anywhere in the world. This may be so; for certainly in this city can be seen every conceivable tint of skin, from the coal-black negro to the pallid European who is ever haunted by a sickly fear of the sun.

LXV.

MORGAN'S RAID.

MORGAN'S Raid took place in 1671, yet the folk of Panama speak of it still. It can never be forgotten, for it led to the destruction of the old capital and the founding of the new, the present Panama being some five or six miles to the west of the city that Morgan demolished.

Morgan was the son of a Welsh yeoman. He took to the sea, and of course made his way to the West Indies. He reached Barbados, where he was sold as a servant. When he had secured his freedom he hurried to Port Royal, and, landing there penniless, was glad enough to join the pirates. His extraordinary adventures have been told in much detail by John Esquemeling, who was one of the party in the Great Raid.[1] Of his early life it need only be said that by industry and merit he rose to be captain of the Buccaneers, and under his guidance they eclipsed all exploits that had hitherto found a place in the annals of piracy. Morgan possessed himself of islands, raised fleets and armies, assaulted and took important cities—such as Puerto del Principe in Cuba, Porto Bello on the Isthmus, Maracaibo on the Spanish Main—and acquired thereby a gratifying amount of wealth.

In his advance upon Old Panama he first of all seized the fortified town of Chagres at the mouth of the river of that name, and then, in January 1671, started up stream with 1200 men packed into thirty-seven canoes and boats. They had a fearful journey, being fired at from the banks with bullets by the

[1] *The Buccaneers of America*: London, 1893.

THE OPEN UNDULATING COUNTRY AROUND OLD PANAMA, ACROSS WHICH MORGAN MADE HIS ADVANCE.

Spaniards and with arrows by the Indians. They were, moreover, unable to get food, and so suffered miseries from starvation. On the seventh day they reached Cruces, hoping to find there a store of provisions; but to their dismay the town had been already burned by the enemy, who had left nothing behind them but some poisoned wine, which had disastrous effect upon those who drank it.

On the eighth day the party started for Panama along the Gold Road, the narrow paved road where Drake had lain in ambush for the mule trains. Their advance was so fiercely opposed by both Indians and Spaniards that they had to fight for every mile of the way. On the ninth day they gained the summit of a ridge and saw below them the superb city of Panama, with its bright-tiled roofs, its orderly streets, its monastery steeples, and above all the great square tower of the cathedral. This tower reminded one of the pirates of Old St. Paul's in London, a tower that he had seen no doubt many a time from some tavern balcony in Limehouse. Beyond the city was the famous harbour and the radiant Pacific Ocean, with ships passing by "upon their lawful occasions." It was a sight that made them forget the toilsome river, the long tramp and the biting pangs of hunger.

Between the hill upon which they stood and the sea stretched an open park-like country, being that same "pleasant country" which Dampier describes, and "which is full of small Hills and Valleys beautified by many Groves and Spots of Trees." It was a land of rich pasture such as encircles many a goodly town in England. On these green slopes, in undisturbed content, numbers of cattle were grazing. By midday the starving pirates had shot a few of these beasts, had built a fire, and had sat down to the only satisfying meal they had enjoyed since they left the sea. After they had gorged themselves to the full they crept down the slope and bivouacked for the night as near to the city as they dared.

The Spaniards were by this time well alarmed; the bells were clanging in the cathedral tower, and all night through it was evident from the lights in the streets and from the lanterns

moving along the walls that every man-at-arms in the city was astir.

Early on the next morning Morgan began his advance. The Spaniards had mustered a strong force of cavalry and artillery outside the town. The buccaneers kept a little way further along the Cruces road, and then, to better avoid the enemy, made a detour to the west, crossing the ground upon which Panama city now stands. They soon defiled into the open savannah around the old capital, and made their final approach by a route parallel to the sea. The land here is in undulating folds, with many dips and gulleys and many clumps of bushes. In these dips and behind these bushes the Spanish sharpshooters were lying, while the main army of 400 horsemen and twenty-four companies of foot were drawn up in battle array before the town. The Spanish governor was unable to take an active part in the defence, having been "lately blooded three times for an Erysipelas."

Morgan extended his men along such shelter as was afforded by a "dry Gut or watercourse." In this position he received the first charge of the enemy's cavalry and from this point he made his general advance. It was a slow and bloody business, for every bush hid a man with a musket, while the horsemen charged again and again. Step by step the buccaneers pushed their way on to the city wall. The outer works were silenced; the bridge was crossed; the gate battered down, and then with hoarse cheers the pirates poured into the streets.

Here the battle "soon kindled very hot." Barricades with guns had been thrown across the chief roads; these had to be rushed and spiked; volleys poured upon the buccaneers from side streets, from loopholed gates, from the parapets and stone balconies of houses. The town was in chaos; distracted people, loaded with their dearest possessions, rushed to and fro; the sick and infirm, who had been left behind, were screaming from their windows. Waggons piled up with treasure were galloping for the far gate, while trembling citizens were saddling mules or were hiding money bags in holes and corners. Dogs, pigs, and fowls scuttled wildly among the rabble. The noise of firearms, of

yelling men and shrieking women, of clattering horses and of doors being crashed into splinters, drowned even the persisting clang of the cathedral bell. The streets reeked with the smell of powder and of smouldering fuses, while in the calm blue air above the city the convent pigeons were wheeling in circles of terror.

By three o'clock in the afternoon the city of Panama was in the hands of the pirates. The loss on both sides was very heavy, and so desperate had been the fighting that many, as Raleigh would say, came to "a most ugly and lamentable death."

Morgan had hardly halted his men in the Plaza before the cry arose that the city was in flames. Whether the firing was accidental or the work of the Spaniards matters little. What is certain is that the "very noble and very loyal city of Panama" was soon reduced to a heap of blackened ruins.

After three weeks devoted to methodical looting, with suitable torture of such of the "nobility and gentry" as fell into his hands, Morgan thought it prudent to leave Panama and return to the Atlantic. "On the 24th of February, of the year 1671, Captain Morgan departed from the city of Panama, or rather from the place where the said city of Panama did stand; of the spoils whereof, he carried with him one hundred and seventy-five beasts of carriage, laden with silver, gold and other precious things, besides six hundred prisoners more or less, between men, women, children, and slaves."

Starting back again along the Cruces road Morgan reached the port at the mouth of the river without loss or adventure. As soon as he had gained the sea "he went secretly on board his own ship," and as secretly slunk off to Port Royal, taking the provision ships with him, and a great deal more than his proper share of the plunder. His old comrades in arms he left behind on the barren shore at Chagres, cursing fluently, shaking their fists and stamping their feet until their bodies rattled like money boxes, for they had still much coin upon them. Before the perfidious Morgan was out of sight they had begun to rummage their sacks and examine their cannikins for food, for they were face to face with starvation.

LXVI.

OLD PANAMA.

OLD Panama, the city that Morgan took, lies on the shores of a great bay where the land is flat and where the jungle grows into the beach. It can claim to be "the oldest European city in America," for it was founded, in or about the year 1518, by one Pedrarias Davila, a penniless adventurer from Spain, who, like many of his kind, found his way to the golden Indies. It was ever a city goodly to look upon, and even at the end, when ruin had emptied its stately streets, it made "a pleasant show to the vessels that are at sea"—at least so said Ringrose, the pirate, and he was not a man of mawkish sentiment.

For a century and more Panama was a place of marvellous splendour, so that all who saw it spoke of "the glorious city of Panama," "the grandest in the South Seas," "the gate of the Western World." It was from Panama that the discoverers of Peru set forth upon their marvel-revealing voyage. To the harbour of the town came in galleons, *pirogues* and pinnaces the precious merchandise of South America, the pearls from the Pearl Islands, the slaves from the far-extending coasts. As the city grew in wealth so it grew in magnificence, in the costliness of its houses, in the extravagance of its luxuries, and in that languid sensuousness which saps life in the tropics. The merchant princes of Panama, with their lace-decked tunics of brocaded silk and their retinues of slaves, well-nigh outshone the haughty citizens of even Venice and Genoa. The great slave market of the city was one of the wonders of the west. The gold fleet that anchored off the islands and landed its freight in the shallow harbour rivalled that of Jason with the Golden Fleece.

THE BRIDGE LEADING INTO OLD PANAMA.

THE SEA WALL AT OLD PANAMA.

At the time of Morgan's Raid Panama possessed a cathedral, two churches, eight monasteries, and over ten score store-rooms for wares. It contained some 7000 houses. The better of these were built of stone or brick, with the upper parts of finely carved cedar wood. The higher stories overhung the lower, so that pleasant shadows fell across the cobble-stoned streets, and the ladies in the balcony could look down on the mules as they passed by with their gay trappings. In the suburbs were gardens, while beyond was that glorious savannah where grazed rich flocks and herds.

Old Panama is some five or six miles to the east of the present city. A part of the way thither is by a wide, new road which crosses the savannah. About a mile along the road will be seen to the left a high ridge. This is called the Buccaneer's Hill, for it is claimed that it was from this point that Morgan obtained his first sight of the city. The road winds through that peaceful, open grass country which so charmed the pirates, who, red with murder, had fought their way across from the Northern Sea. It is, as Dampier says, "a brave land," of just such gentle downs and dells as children play among. Cattle graze on these uplands still, as they did on the day when Morgan and his men appeared panting over the crest of the hill.

The new road probably follows very nearly the route taken by the buccaneers in their approach upon the city. It crosses a tiny stream in a hollow, and there can be little doubt but that this is the "dry Gut or watercourse" along which Morgan extended his men and where he awaited the first charge of the Spanish cavalry. The waving downs between this little "nullah" and the town would have given excellent shelter to the skirmishers who harassed him in the early part of his advance.

As the site of the city is neared the road must needs be left, and the rest of the journey undertaken on foot. The ruins of Old Panama lie in the midst of what appears at first to be an impenetrable jungle. Shortly after entering the wood, however, a narrow road is come upon which pushes through the shadows of the forest in the direction of the city. It is a suspicious road,

that turns stealthily to this side and to that, as if it went in dread. Yet it moves aside for neither ridge nor gulley, as if it knew no tiredness. Even when the sun is at high noon the road is dark, for only in rare places will a streak of light fall across it. Although roughly paved with large stones, it is yet wild and unkempt, and much overgrown with weeds.

This is the famous Gold Road, the road to Cruces, the road of the mule trains that carried the wealth of Peru across the land on the way to Spain. Along this purgatorial path, poor, worn and neglected as it is, treasure has been borne to the worth of untold millions. One almost expects to hear the jingle of the mule bells and the clatter of hoofs on the stones, or to see emerge round the bend the soldiers of the advanced guard, with their muskets in their hands and their horses sniffing the way in fear. The silence that muffles the path is now broken only by the call of birds or the rustle of a snake in the thicket. It was down this tragic road that the pirates rushed, hot-foot, upon the city in the terrible year of 1671, while it is probable enough that by this very path the spy sent forth by Drake made his way to the market-place where he witnessed the marshalling of the mule train.

Colonel Gorgas, who has been long resident in Panama, tells me that the Gold Road can be still followed for miles towards Cruces, although it is in many places a mere trail in the forest. In like manner there stretch to the northwards those other two famous roads, the one to Nombre de Dios, and that which led to Porto Bello.

Keeping to the Cruces road, one emerges at last into the open by the margin of a wide and beautiful bay. Here the paved track runs between low walls, and then crosses a stone bridge into the town. The bridge is narrow, as no doubt the buccaneers found to their cost. It spans a little arm of the sea which runs into the salt-water lagoon behind the city. In spite of its great age this bridge, with its single arch, is well preserved, for the Spanish masons of old days were no mean builders. On the far side of the bridge is the gate-house, a building of great strength, whose ruins are almost shrouded in the forest.

The ancient town lay along the shore of two bays which are separated by a spit of rock. The bay to the west of the spit presents a wide sweep, full open to the sea. This is the bay just spoken of. The cove to the east of the point is small and narrow, and was the harbour of Old Panama. The jungle in which the city is lost comes down to the very edge of the sands, and is so dense that it is impossible to make a way through it. To reach the cathedral and the haven it is necessary therefore to walk along the beach. What a tramp it is! There is not a breath of wind stirring; there is not a speck of shade; the heat is intense; the white sand into which the feet sink at every step is almost too hot to touch, so that one wonders why the land crabs which crawl over it are not cracked by the heat. The air above the beach trembles and shimmers as if it rose from a crucible. The glare from the sea and from the metal-like waste of glistening mud left by the tide is almost blinding.

At the far end of the bay, near the spit of rock, is the cathedral. It was dedicated to Saint Anastasius and stands close to the beach. It is represented now by a strong, square tower, built of brick faced with grey-green stone. Its upper windows are arched, its lower windows are square. It is a simple tower of immense solidity, still sturdy and defiant. This is the tower that Drake saw from the wood, a league beyond the town; this is the beacon that cheered the eyes of Morgan when he gained the summit of the sea hills, and that guided him in his desperate venture. This same tower was the pillar of cloud, seen far out at sea, that led Bartholomew Sharp and a score of other ruffians in many nefarious wanderings. It is said that upon the altar of the Virgin within this church Pizarro laid his votive offering before he started upon that voyage which led to the discovery of Peru. Within the tower is a stone stair leading to the belfry, the very stair down which stumbled the trembling sexton who tolled the alarm bell as Morgan and his men neared the bridge. Beneath the tower is a wide stone arch of surprising massiveness. The walls of the church still stand, but the space between them is filled

with tangled bush, through which no man could make his way unless armed with a cutlass.

Along the margin of the shore, near by the cathedral, are heavy walls and the remains of strong buildings, which represent, no doubt, the sea defences and the store-houses of the old city. Any who force a passage through the wood, which lies at the back of the church, will come upon endless relics of the great metropolis—paved ways and wide courts, stout walls, the lower stories of houses as well as doorways, stone windows filled with creepers, and rugged foundations covered by the undergrowth of a tropical forest. Long streets can be defined, and vague masses of titanic masonry can be met with, which may have belonged to fortresses, to monasteries, or to prisons.

Over two hundred years have gone by since these lanes echoed to the feet of men; since the roads were thronged with eager folk, pushing their way up from the quay; since the mule bells broke in upon the dreams of fair women who dozed in the cedarwood balconies; since the children chased the lizards in the *patio* which is now a mere maze of brambles.

The famous harbour of the city is a spot of strange fascination. It is shut in by an impenetrable forest, whose trees and bushes come down to the water's edge. The shore is of rough, black-grey rock. The harbour almost dries out at low tide, presenting then a sheet of shining mud in a ring of green. Ships in the old days could only enter at high water. When the tide ebbed they were left stranded, and so could be careened and scrubbed, and their cargoes carried ashore on the heads of slaves or by mule packs or in carts. It is hard to believe that this was once a famous haven, crammed with craft of all kinds, and echoing with the shipwrights' hammers, with the shouts of seamen, the noise of gangs of busy porters, and the occasional rattle of a salute, as a ship appeared in the offing. On the point of rock is an old stone fort, square-walled and solid, but hard to enter, not by reason of its defences, but from the entanglement of brushwood which almost buries it from sight.

From this harbour mouth, looking westwards, can be seen the three little conical islands of Flamenco, Perico, and Naos. It was

OLD PANAMA—THE WEST BAY AND THE TOWER OF THE CATHEDRAL.

THE HARBOUR OF OLD PANAMA.

around these islands, in the month of April 1680, that was fought one of the most desperate hand-to-hand fights ever witnessed on the sea—a fight between Spaniards and English pirates. It was in this engagement that the buccaneers Coxon, Sawkins, and Ringrose captured that ever-adventurous galleon the *Most Blessed Trinity*. The harbour of Panama that saw all this is now an utter solitude, silent and forgotten, a sea refuge hidden in a mysterious forest, a place of shadows, haunted only by pelicans and sea birds, and where none but the ghosts of ships come in on the rising tide.

LXVII.

"GROG'S" VICTORY.

SHORTLY after leaving Colon the steamer comes in sight of the beautiful cape of Manzanillo, a green cape where tree-covered hills rise one behind the other until they are lost far away in the haze. In this cape of creeks is an inlet where lies the shrunken town of Porto Bello. It lies at the end of a silent fiord, through which a stretch of blue water finds its way into the heart of the hills. As the ship passes by, it is possible to see the few houses of the town, the white sails in the harbour, the low sea wall and the stone fort of San Jeronimo. From all accounts of the place it would appear to be still interesting and picturesque, although Samuel Champlain considered it to be "the most evil and pitiful residence in the world," and Tom Cringle found it "a miserable, dirty, damp hole." In the depths of this haven rests a caravel of Christopher Columbus, which was abandoned there during the explorer's last voyage.

Porto Bello, in spite of its strong fortifications, was many times taken by English buccaneers. The most desperate and successful of these assaults was that carried out by the redoubtable Morgan in 1668. In some respects the most remarkable capture of Porto Bello was effected by Admiral Vernon in 1739. On the outbreak of the War of Jenkins' Ear Admiral Vernon was dispatched with a serviceable fleet to the West Indies. He at once made for Porto Bello. Porto Bello held a fond and romantic place in the British mind. It was on the Spanish Main. It rang with stirring tales of pirates and with the exploits of such heroes as Drake, Coxon and Morgan. Every schoolboy adored Porto Bello. Moreover it was believed to be stacked roof-high

with treasure of a very costly kind, and to be defended in a way which was both fearful and wonderful. The Plate fleet anchored there, so that it was altogether a very terrible place.

Admiral Vernon, who was five and fifty years of age when he started upon this daring venture against the city of Apollyon, was known throughout the fleet as "Old Grog." He received this nickname because he wore a boat cloak made of grogram, which same notable item in his wardrobe led to the addition of a word to the English tongue. In 1740 he issued an order that the rum served out to the men should be mixed with water. This edict, although sound in physiological principle, involved a meddling with the sailor's most sacred asset and so was not popular in the foc'sle. The men called the mixture "grog," and grog it has been to this day, as the dictionaries will testify.

Now the taking of Porto Bello proved to be a very trivial affair. The Spaniards had no suspicion of Vernon's coming. Their forts were neglected, their ramparts in decay, most of the guns were dismounted, the store of ammunition was small, and the garrison had been greatly reduced in numbers by yellow fever. The Iron Castle on the north of the inlet was battered by the ships and promptly silenced. The men then landed to attack the Stone Castle by the town. They climbed in through the gun embrasures by standing upon one another's shoulders, like a party of mischievous boys. They met with practically no resistance, for the town capitulated readily enough, and the vigour of the defence may be judged from the fact that in this assault the total number of the British killed amounted to four.

In due course the news came home that Porto Bello the Terrible had fallen. England went incontinently mad with joy over the glorious and incredible victory. Think of it as the news was read out! "Porto Bello captured! The Iron Castle battered into ruins! The Stone Fort stormed! The town in the hands of the English!" There was a general rejoicing through the length and breadth of the land: flags were hoisted on every pole, shouting mobs filled the streets, while every village tavern was crowded with men clamouring for tankards of ale in which to

drink the health of the gallant admiral. More than that, countless addresses of congratulation were sent to the King. London conferred upon the admiral the freedom of the City, while both Houses of Parliament voted him their admiring thanks. Every public-house that happened to be building at the time was named the "Vernon's Head," and any row of new houses in a town became forthwith "Porto Bello Terrace" or "Vernon Place."

Last of all, in order that the people might be able to hand down to their sons and grandsons the memory of this splendid victory, numerous medals were struck. They bore on one side the figure of the admiral and the inscription—"He took Porto Bello with six ships." It is to be feared that in time the be-medalled folk discerned some sarcasm in this terse sentence, when they came to know that he might just as well have taken Porto Bello with one ship.

In the National Portrait Gallery is a picture by Gainsborough of a meek, flabby old gentleman, in a cherry-coloured velvet coat with cambric frills about the wrists. Beneath in bold letters are the words "The Hero of Porto Bello."

LXVIII.

HOW DRAKE WRESTLED WITH THE SHADOW.

PORTO BELLO is memorable as the burial-place of that most adventurous of British seamen, Sir Francis Drake, while to the east of the point is the Gulf of Darien, where was laid the scene of a strange and characteristic episode in his life.

Drake was a man of strong will, who, when once he had bent his mind to a task, cut his way to the goal through every barrier and crushed with a hand of iron whomsoever opposed him in his resolve. Each venture that he undertook he pursued with a determination as dogged as fate, and with a patient, buoyant obstinacy that knew not failure. After the disaster at San Juan d'Ulloa, in which Drake shared, he vowed to undermine the power of Spain in the West Indies. He set about this labour with cold-blooded precision. There was to be no mad rushing upon the foe. The scheme of attack must first be perfect in every detail. He made two preliminary voyages to the Indies to spy out the country, to find points for landing, to make for himself a safe base from which to strike.

In certain secret harbours on the Main he established store-houses and forts, as well as the rudiments of a dockyard. He took out pinnaces in sections so that they could be pieced together and launched in quiet creeks. On a beach hitherto untrodden by man he set up a blacksmith's forge, with anvil and bench and a supply of coals from Plymouth. His stores and his provisions were unsurpassed in excellence. He picked his men with prudence and would have none but the best. He forgot nothing omitted nothing. So careful was he of the health of his crew that many assume him to have possessed a specific against scurvy

The men were not only well fed, but well clothed, while they were armed with a completeness which would put a battleship to shame. Before he had hoisted his banner he had made himself, to the best of his knowledge, invincible. He fought the Indians; he fought the Spaniards; he slashed a road through the thickest jungle; he battled his way through the wildest gale. In a land barren of food he defied starvation; in a land of sweltering heat he defied the sun.

In that voyage in which he made his first attack upon the coast he took his brothers John and Joseph with him. John was killed in 1572 when boarding a Spanish frigate. In January 1573 Drake was hiding in one of his secret harbours in the Gulf of Darien, making preparations for the foray on the Isthmus. While in this pleasant haven a new enemy appeared, an enemy he had never before come upon—the yellow fever. His men fell sick one after the other, suddenly and mysteriously. Not a day went by but some sturdy sailor was buried in the sands. It was a spectacle terrible to contemplate. Two jovial Devon lads, for example, as strong as bullocks, would be playing bowls on the beach in the cool of the evening. In four days' time upon that very beach they would be stretched out dead.

At last his brother Joseph sickened and died. Then Drake's masterful spirit arose. He would fight this invisible enemy as he had fought the Spaniards and the Maroons. He would wrestle with death. He would wring from the very dead the secret of this craven foe who struck in the dark. Such was his set purpose that he ordered the doctor to dissect before his eyes the corpse of his brother. The loathsome operation was performed in a palm hut, by the sands no doubt, while Drake stood by with clenched teeth. The sickening details of the autopsy are set down in the log of the voyage, but there was nothing revealed that gave a clue as to how the evil could be gripped and strangled. For once Drake had met with a foe who was more than his match. The doctor himself died four days after the examination was completed.

It was a strange and terrible drama. As Hercules wrestled with Death for the body of Alcestis, so, on the palm-lined shore of

this blue creek, the strong man Drake wrestled with Death for the lives of his comrades. By the time he sailed forth from this haunted haven into the open sea only forty-four men were left out of a crew of seventy-three.

Sir Francis Drake's last voyage was—as has already been said [1]—a voyage of failure and disaster. His old friend, Sir John Hawkins, had died off Puerto Rico. Drake had been repulsed at San Juan. He made attacks upon certain towns along the Spanish Main, but gained little save disappointment from the venture. Drake, now fifty-five years of age, was failing in strength and energy day by day. "As his end drew near the scenes of his youth seemed to call him with an irresistible voice." [2] He must go to Nombre de Dios where he had made his famous landing just twenty-three years ago. He went, but Nombre de Dios was empty and deserted. He sent a company across the Isthmus along the Panama road, but a few days later they came running back into the town in full retreat and utterly disheartened. This was a blow Drake found hard to bear. "Then it was," writes Corbett, "that the undaunted heart began to wax cold. The jovial face grew sombre. The cheery smile, to which his men had ever been accustomed to look for light in the darkest hours, had faded, and failure began to haunt him, as he recognised how the terror of his name had changed the Indies. The seas were deserted, the ports bristled with guns, and feverish wakefulness had supplanted the old dreamy security."

Leaving Nombre de Dios he started off on a mad expedition to the Mosquito Gulf, where he was compelled to take shelter behind a small desert island called Escudo de Veragua, some ten miles from the mainland. It is flat and tree-covered, with reddish-brown cliffs. These cliffs have been separated from the island, here and there forming small islets, "some of which have been pierced through, and the arches, being crowned by dense foliage and trees from seventy to eighty feet high, have a most remarkable and picturesque appearance." [3] The anchorage is on the

[1] Page 218.

[2] *Sir Francis Drake*, by Julian Corbett, page 204 : London, 1901.

[3] *The West India Pilot*, vol. i. page 292.

south-western side of the island, where the land is low and swampy and the supply of water very scant. In this unhealthy place Drake —now prostrate with dysentery—hung on day after day in the hope that with a change of wind he could press on to the west. His men were dying one after the other. The water they drank was putrid, the air they breathed was fever-laden, for they had crept into a veritable hiding-place of death. The admiral was lying in his cot too feeble to move, but it was not until another week had gone by that he would consent to weigh anchor and turn towards home.

In seven days after leaving the island the fleet anchored off Porto Bello. It was on the morning of January 28, 1596. Drake had long sunk into a state of semi-consciousness. On the dawn of this day something roused him. It may have been the tramp of men overhead shortening sail, or the rattle of the chain in the hawse-pipe as the anchor ran out. He raised himself in his cot—a shrunken ghost of a man—and then it would seem there came upon him for the first time the knowledge that he was dying.

Die he would not! He had fought every foe he had ever met. He would fight Death too. He sat up: he called for his clothes: he railed: he mocked at the coming Shadow. His trembling servant dressed him, sighing to see the once great wrists turned to the wrists of a child and the sturdy limbs shrivelled to no more than bones. The master would put on his best tunic and his lace collar, his shoulder ribbons and his last new swordbelt and sword. He would now walk out upon the quarter-deck to show the crew that Francis Drake was ready to lead them still. One step and it was his last. He was lifted back to his bed, and there, clad as he would have been on the eve of a battle, the great sea-captain died.

He was buried a league out to sea, and on either side of him were sunk one of his own ships and his last taken Spanish prizes. The mail steamer as it follows the coast must pass over the very spot.

It was just such a resting-place as his heart would desire and in just such company would he wish to be. Landwards stretches

the scene of his early exploits, for Porto Bello lies here open to the tide, while round the cape is the haven of Nombre de Dios. The beauty of the spot is unsurpassed. It is ever summer time on these high wolds. The hills that creep down to the beach are as green as the hills of Devon. The sea is an iris-blue, and when the wind is still there is never a sound to be heard but that of the rollers breaking on the reef.

LXIX.

CARTAGENA HARBOUR.

SOME twenty-two hours suffice for the passage from Colon to Cartagena, the most wonderful and picturesque city on the Spanish Main. As first seen, when approached from the south, it may be a city fashioned by enchantment. A ridge of low hills comes down to the sea, to a point far out from the land, where they glide imperceptibly into the deep. Beyond the spot at which the land seems to have ended is a faint white city floating on the water, illusive and ineffable, a place of ghostly walls and towers as unsubstantial as a cloud. The whole fabric is colourless, and such is the glamour of the sea that the unreal city seems to be almost transparent.

Cartagena cannot be approached directly from the ocean, owing to the rocks along the shore and the heavy surf which runs perpetually upon the ness. It is reached by a great lagoon, or inland sea, lying to the south of it. There are two entrances into this lagoon: the one nearer to the town is the Boca Grande, but it is too shallow for any but small boats; the other entrance is the Boca Chica, which is far away from the city to the very south of the inland sea. Between the two Bocas is the island of Tierra Bomba, which forms a sea barrier over four miles in length. Between the Boca Grande and the city is a narrow spit of land which Drake has made famous. (See Map.)

The sheet of water thus separated from the open sea by the island and the strip of land is eight miles long, and is divided naturally into three harbours: the Outer, which occupies the major part of the lagoon; the Middle, which is the modern harbour; and the Inner, a small, shallow basin under the walls of the town.

CARTAGENA—THE ENTRANCE INTO THE MIDDLE HARBOUR AND THE POINT OF MANZANILLA ISLAND.

CARTAGENA—FORT SAN LAZAR.

At the entrance of the Boca Chica is a massive and grizzled fort of white stone—the Fort San Fernando. It is on the end of Tierra Bomba island and is much overgrown by bushes, for it is of great age. Its dignified water gate, its many gun embrasures and its stone sentry boxes give it a brave look as the haven is entered. On the opposite side of the channel, on a small island, is the ancient Fort of San José. Happily these defences were not in existence in Drake's time, when he entered the harbour in open boats, captured a frigate, and towed her away out of sheer bravado and light-heartedness.

The wide, land-locked bay, or Outer Harbour, with its palm-covered islands, its many capes and its blue-green water, is very beautiful. At the end is the town, still eight miles off, but more clearly to be viewed. It lies on a flat seemingly in the sea, with only the sky behind it, a fantastic fabric of brown-grey walls, of domes and steeples, of towers and chocolate-coloured roofs. Where the town joins to the land is a conical hill of rock—a kind of acropolis—on the summit of which is a black fort of forbidding aspect, overgrown with green and showing ruinous breaches in its walls. This is Fort Lazar, which successfully resisted an attack of the English during the siege of 1739. Some way further landwards is another hill, also conical and bare, but precipitous and of immense size, reaching indeed to the height of 510 feet. This is La Popa, on the summit of which is a venerable convent.

Before reaching the Middle Harbour the Boca Grande is passed, lying away to the left. The opening into the Middle Harbour is narrow, being wedged between Castillo Grande Point on the left or west side and a spur of Manzanilla Island on the right. The Spaniards in times of panic were apt to sink vessels in this entrance, the keels and ribs of which rotting deep in the mud may well have added to the present straitness of the way. The Inner Harbour is so small and so shallow—having a depth of no more than from one to two fathoms—as to be available only for minor craft. It was defended at its entrance by the Pastelillo Fort, the fine ruins of which are still to be seen. The steamer comes alongside a pier at the city end of the Middle Harbour. This haven,

as already stated, is separated from the open sea by a spit of low land, which stretches from the town walls to the Boca Grande. From the part it played in the year 1586 it may well be called Drake's Spit. A railway now runs along it from the steamer pier to the city, so that passengers must needs pass over that part which separates the Inner Harbour from the Caribbean Sea.

Drake's Spit is made up of a rough beach, a thick growth of mangroves, and a number of cocoa-nut palms. The story of Drake's Spit is as follows. After the capture of San Domingo in 1586 (page 251) Drake made his way to Cartagena. He entered the great harbour through the Boca Chica (*i.e.* through the present steamer entrance) "without any resistance of ordnance or other impeachment." This was at four in the afternoon. He made his way up the harbour as far as the Boca Grande. When night came on he sent off a party of sailors under Martin Frobisher to attack Fort Pastelillo, which then stood, as it still stands, at the mouth of the Inner Harbour. The fort was very strong and the attack failed, as Drake assumed it would, for this was a mere feint in order to withdraw the attention of the Spaniards from the real assault on the town.

This assault was led by Carleil, who had so distinguished himself at San Domingo. Carleil landed his soldiers at the end of the spit where it abuts on the Boca Grande. This narrow strip of beach and bush is about two and a quarter miles in length. The men advanced along the shore in silence, under the cover of the trees and the darkness of the night. The last half mile of the spit, where it comes between the Inner Harbour and the sea, and where the railway from the pier now runs in peace, is very narrow. As the English neared this point they were discovered by some mounted scouts, who promptly galloped off to alarm the garrison. Across the narrow part the buccaneers found that a wall had been built, with a staked ditch in front of it. There was a gap in the wall to allow the horsemen to pass in, but the entry was already blocked by gabions in the form of wine butts filled with earth. Behind the wall were six demi-culverins and sakers, and a force of 300 men armed with muskets and pikes. Moreover, two

great galleys, drawn up on the harbour beach, were manned by a company of soldiers who could command the passage with their firearms. Every gun was trained upon the spit.

As Carleil advanced, the Spaniards poured a torrent of shot upon the narrow way. The British kept silence and never fired. They crawled along the water's edge so as to be out of range until they were close under the wall. Then, at a given signal, they made a rush for the gap through the blizzard of bullets. Down went the wine butts like ninepins. A volley was fired in the very face of the horrified defenders of the breach, and with a yell the English fell upon them with pike and cutlass. Carleil with his own hand cut down the standard-bearer. The Spaniards without more ado turned heel and fled, helter-skelter, for the city. As Thomas Cates, who wrote a chronicle of the fight, modestly explains, "our pikes were longer than theirs."

The British tore after them like a pack of baying wolves. The flying crowd made an attempt to stand but were swept down, so that the men of the long pikes had to leap over their bodies. "We gave them no leisure to breathe," says Master Cates with great relish. In a moment the market-place was gained, but every street leading from it was blocked with earthworks. Over these mounds went the Spaniards and the buccaneers after them, as if it were a hurdle-race. Behind each barricade Indians were posted with poisoned arrows, but Drake's men jumped on their backs or their heads as they crouched, and gave them a taste of the long pikes if they had the heart to stand. Poisoned stakes had been driven into the ground "to run into one's feet," but as the Spaniards stumbled over them in their terror the pursuers had something soft to tread upon.

Women hurled stones, pots, and jugs out of windows; a musket would blaze through a loophole in a gate; figures in night attire crouched in archways or fled into the gloom shrieking wildly. Every dog in the town was barking as if possessed, while drums beat the alarm without ceasing, Whenever a stand was made by the garrison the pikes charged, and the breathless Cartagenians, scattered and bleeding, bolted down dark alleys or

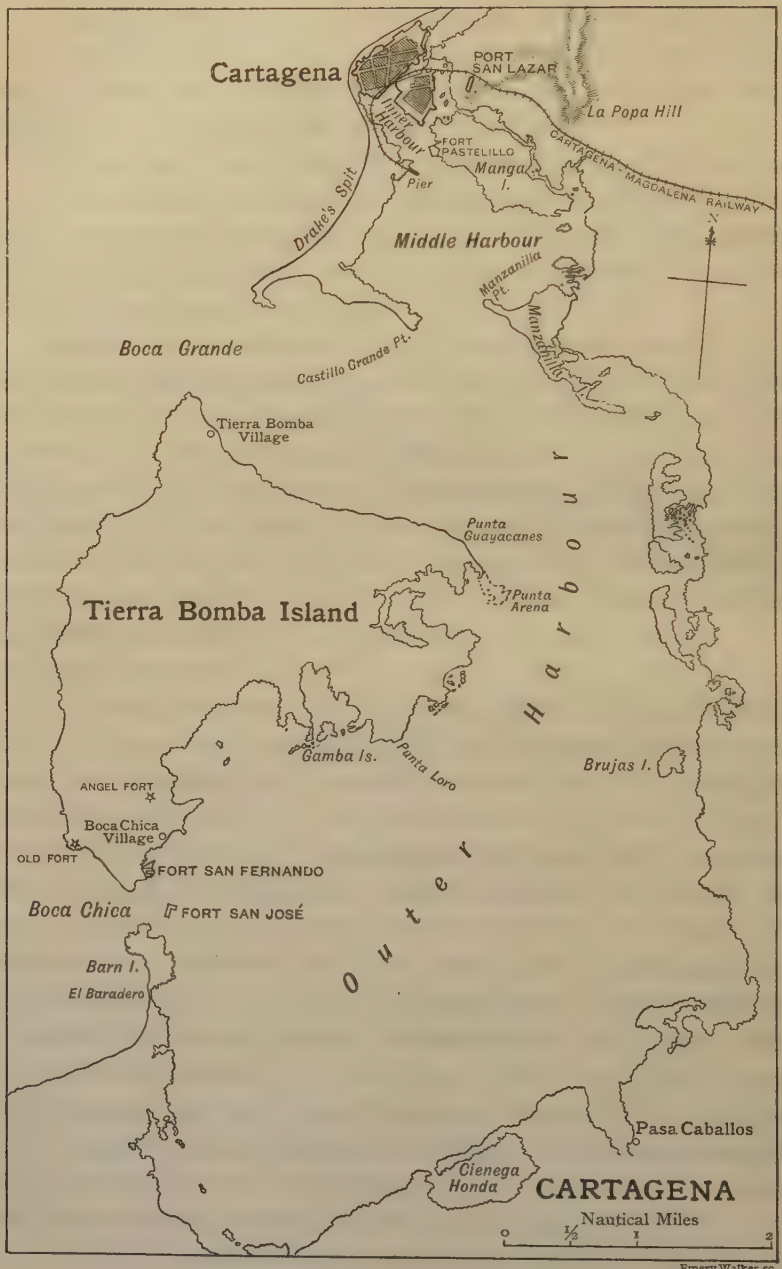
hid under carts. In one of these street fights the Spanish commander was taken by Captain Goring, "after the said captain had first hurt him with his sword." .This is gently put, for the captain, being no weakling, may be assumed to have well-nigh cleft the commander in two when he "hurt him."

The town was taken and taken handsomely; the fort that had defied Frobisher was seized and blown up, and, after a pleasant stay in Cartagena of six weeks—during which time Drake entertained the governor and bishop at dinner—that officer departed with 110,000 ducats in his pocket.

Another interesting attack upon Cartagena was made in 1741 by Admiral Vernon, otherwise known as "Old Grog," or the Hero of Porto Bello. The admiral, after he had sufficiently enjoyed his triumph at Porto Bello (page 342), proceeded to Cartagena, but found that city by no means in a yielding mood. The Boca Chica was blocked by a heavy boom, anchored across the channel between Fort San Fernando and Fort San José. Moored behind the boom were four very solid ships of the line. On either side of the entrance numerous entrenchments had been thrown up to withstand a landing.

The land forces were under the command of General Wentworth. The general and the admiral spent a considerable part of each day in quarrelling. Wentworth wanted to do things in his own way, and when he was thwarted he was apt to sulk. Vernon, on the other hand, used "unbecoming language" to Wentworth, and was generally "boisterous and overbearing," as became the hero of Porto Bello. In spite of this war of words the outposts on either side of the Boca Chica were taken very gallantly, and then the bombardment of Fort San Fernando began. This stronghold, which mounted no less than eighty-two cannons and three mortars, was finally breached. A force was landed and the fortress captured, with the loss of only one man on the side of the English. The Spanish scuttled three of the ships which were anchored behind the boom, while the invaders seized the fourth. The boom was broken up and the fleet sailed into the harbour.

On April 1 (a somewhat appropriate date) Admiral Vernon



Emery Walker sc.

wrote home to announce that he had captured Fort San Fernando. Once more the people of England went mad with excitement. It was Porto Bello all over again. Ballads were composed, and sung in the streets, with the refrain "Vernon the Scourge of Spain." More medals were struck. One of these shows the Scourge in a kind of garden-party dress, strolling boldly in front of the city. On the rim of the medal is the inscription "Admiral Vernon viewing the town of Carthagena."[1] There was an unrealised amount of truth in this posy, for the admiral did little more than *view* the city during his sojourn. He never captured it.

The fleet moved up into the Middle Harbour. The Spaniards had abandoned the Castillo Grande, had blown up the fort on Manzanilla point, and had sunk two ships in the channel, according to their custom on these occasions. The siege of the town went on very slowly, as Vernon and Wentworth were so much engaged in fighting between themselves that they had little time to devote to the Spaniards.

One month after the fleet had appeared off the Boca Chica a force of 1500 men was landed to attack Fort San Lazar—the fort on the rocky acropolis. The assault was made just before day-break, but affairs at headquarters were so mismanaged that the English were repulsed with the loss of 179 killed, 459 wounded and 16 taken prisoners. During the progress of these events yellow fever broke out in the fleet, with the result that no less than 500 men died, while over 1000 were lying sick.

A final council of war was held on the flag-ship, which ended in the usual manner. Vernon, after more "unbecoming language," dashed out of the cabin in a rage, slamming the door after him. The land forces were withdrawn as useless, and then the Scourge of Spain proceeded to show the world—and especially Wentworth—what the Navy could do, unaided and alone. The perverse old gentleman warped a prize, the *Galicia*, as near to the town as he could. She carried sixteen guns and was fortified with earth and sand. The *Galicia* fired fretfully at the city for seven long hours by the cathedral clock. The city, of course, replied, and

[1] *The Royal Navy*, by Laird Clowes, vol. iii.

with such effect that the poor earth-laden ship was riddled with holes, so that she had to cut her cables and be abandoned. In this fatuous attempt the admiral lost sixty-two stout mariners.

After these various exhibitions of strength the Scourge of Spain pulled up his anchors and sailed out into the Caribbean Sea.

A STREET IN CARTAGENA.

LXX.

THE CITY OF CARTAGENA.

CARTAGENA, the sea-environed city, the city of unforgotten centuries, is a place of surprising charm. The sun and the wind have bleached it, the rain has dappled the sheltered wall with tints of madder and grey, but it remains yet a fine memorial of the gorgeous days of Spain. It is, indeed, an older-looking Spanish town than any in Castile, for there is so little within its compass that is really new. It is like a piece of sumptuous tapestry which the bungling of the irreverent needle has failed to spoil.

An immense wall, which is especially formidable along the sea-front, surrounds the city on all sides. This wall, where it has escaped the sun, is almost black. Curious weeds have crept over it, while plants in flower and even bushes grow here and there in the gaps between the stones. It is made strong by bastions and outworks, is dignified by high battlements and sentry towers of stone, is overshadowed by many palms, and presents within its girth steep stairs and echoing passages. The main entrance to the city is through a handsome gateway of yellow stone, surmounted by a steeple, and flanked by pillars. It presents three openings—a central arch for the mule teams, and two small side entries for folk who walk. These lead into the principal square, the Plaza de los Coches, where the houses are built over a shady colonnade of many arches and of no mean age. In the shadows of this passage are incongruous shops, gay with the tints of bright shawls and silks, or of tropical fruits. It is a place too for the hot, drowsy bodega, with its casks, its tables and benches, as well as for the lolling cigarette-smoker whom one would not be surprised to find clad as a toreador.

The narrow streets when in shade are as dark as a way in a wood, but when the sun pours along them they are dazzling to discomfort. The roads are for the most part ruinous and full of ruts and holes. They are muffled as to sound, however, owing to the custom of throwing odd garbage into the street, as well as to the fact that not a few are as thick in sand and dust as a dry beach. This dust is apt to be converted into mud by the copious slop-water which the housewife empties into the road. A few carts creak and groan through the town, but most of those who ride ride on donkeys or mules, and on the mule pack much of the merchandise of the place is carried. There is little, therefore, to break the silence of the road but the patter of hoofs, the laughter of handsome Spanish women who lean from verandahs, the clatter of a cracked church bell, or the twang of a guitar.

The houses are mostly of two stories, with white or yellow walls, or walls of a dubious colour that would be called "faded." They are in various stages of decay, so that it would seem as if the dust in the street might be due to fallen plaster and crumbling stone. The buildings, large or small, are very lavish in balconies, which are often of bright tints, showing, it may be, a green roof, a lilac wall, and white railings. Some are most beautifully carved; while the many which are of stone or ancient iron-work are remarkably picturesque. In certain of the narrower lanes the balconies on opposite sides of the way project so far as almost to meet overhead. Curious bow windows supported on white stone corbels are common, as also are window gratings or grilles of metal or elaborate wood-work. Stone gateways closed by heavy doors knobbed with brass are come upon, as well as lofty buildings which would have been palaces when the city was in its glory. Here and there is a peep into a courtyard with green bushes in it, a shaded well, and a little balcony looking down upon the quiet of it all. An unexpected tower will be met with, or a fort which has been turned into a dwelling-house, or an arcade of fine pillars with no apparent reason for its existence.

High above all, against the hard sky, are the ample roofs of a tropical city, brown roofs and red roofs, whose covering of tiles is

as deeply ridged as is a newly ploughed field, and whose colour is enhanced in many spots by the green crest of a palm tree. There are several ancient churches in the city, certain of which are remarkably beautiful. The old cathedral is worth a long journey to see. It contains a hundred features of interest, from the great studded door to the magnificent altar-piece. It affords, better than any other building in Cartagena, some conception of the hauteur and wealth of Spain when she was the mistress of the New World.

The Fort San Lazar, which resisted the attack of Admiral Vernon in 1741, is outside the walls, on the level ground between the city and La Popa Hill. It is placed on the crown of an isolated, rocky hill 125 feet in height. The sides are heavily scarped and show two tiers of stone works. The place was described in Vernon's time as a square fort, having three demi-bastions, two guns on each face, one on each flank, and three in each curtain. It is now a deserted, crumbling and picturesque ruin. The ramparts, reached by a steep rock road, are built of narrow red bricks, covered with plaster or faced with stone. The platform on the summit is almost filled with bushes and weeds. Here is a solid guard-room, a glum, black mass, with an immensely thick roof. At the corners of the square are sentry towers, each surmounted by a cupola. Brick stairs lead down to a tunnel cut in the rock, which passage opens upon the lower platform of the fortress.

The view from the parapets is most fascinating. To the south are the harbour with the water battery, Fort Pastelillo, at the mouth of its inner basin, Drake's Spit and the narrows near the Boca Grande. To the east are La Popa and its convent. To the west lies, at one's feet, the whole of the walled city of Cartagena, a marvellous spectacle to contemplate. Beyond and far to the north is the sea.

It would have been good to have stood on this hill when Drake sailed by in 1573, on his way to Plymouth after his successful foray. In the harbour at that time were lying the great Plate ships and their convoy of men-of-war on the eve

of departing for Spain. Drake, out of sheer devilment and buoyancy of spirits, must needs stand close in, and "then run by before the whole fleet with the flag of St. George waving defiance at his masthead, and his silken pennants and ensigns floating down to the water to bid them a mocking farewell."[1]

[1] *Sir Francis Drake*, by Julian Corbett, page 46 : London, 1901.

CARTAGENA—PLAZA DE LOS MARTIRES.

LXXI.

OFF TO THE FRONT.

THE next place touched at after Cartagena is Puerto Colombia A spot less dull is hardly to be conceived. It consists of a long, bulbous-ended pier which has been shot out into the blue like a chameleon's tongue. The pier is embellished with a railway, and at its land extremity is a small, depressed village. These objects deposited in a barren and featureless bay represent Puerto Colombia.

Made fast to the pier, however, was an object of considerable interest. It was a gun-boat belonging to the Republic of Colombia. Certain hasty and thoughtless passengers mistook this battleship at first sight for a tramp steamer. The commander or admiral was an Englishman. He had done his best to bring the vessel up to British conceptions of trimness, but at the moment the work was one which might have daunted Hercules after his experience of the Augean stables. The presence of the man-of-war was due to the fact that a revolution was pending or in actual progress, and troops were in consequence being hurried to the front. Indeed the last contingent of 150 men were about to embark that very evening.

In a while the 150 soldiers made their appearance. They came up to the pier-head by train in open trucks. Out of the trucks they tumbled, and lined up on the landing stage to await the roll-call. It is worthy to note that these men, although just off to the front, were not only all sober but all very quiet. So far as any enthusiasm was concerned they might have been on their way to gaol. They were a mixture of

Mulattoes and white men, and, in the point of physique, were a very presentable body of young fellows. There was nothing military about them, nor did they appear to have been at any time over-troubled by drilling.

They wore the ordinary every-day dress of the streets and the fields. Some had donned cotton jackets, some blouses or "jumpers," a few paraded in cloth coats. One man was conspicuous in what had evidently been a tweed suit, while another looked very smart in an old black dinner jacket. In the matter of trousers also the regiment served to demonstrate how greatly fashion and individual tastes may vary in the matter of clothes. Some wore slippers, others the shoe of the country, and a few the common European boot. Straw hats were evidently more or less *en règle*, although a number of the men-at-arms wore rakish felt hats or sombreros. They of course all carried firearms. Many of these weapons were of interest by reason of their antiquity. Taken together they would have formed a fairly exhaustive display illustrative of the evolution of the modern rifle from its rude beginnings. Some of the soldiers carried their ammunition in bandoliers, but the larger number used pouches or bags—game bags, fishing bags, school bags.

String was very largely employed in the equipment of these soldiers, and indeed without string the more fragmentary of the men would have fallen to pieces. Their badges of rank, however, were attached to their arms by means of pins, string not being efficient for this purpose. The men who were most anxious to make themselves really dashing carried towels round their necks. Each warrior was encumbered by a bundle in which were a mat, a blanket, and, I assume, a change of raiment. Many, however, had added to the bundle a kettle or a cooking pot, a bottle or two suspended by strings or a guitar. These defenders of their country looked indeed rather like a parcel of lads just off to a boys' holiday camp.

The officer in charge of the company was a remarkable person, of astounding activity and red-hot military zeal. On his head was a large Panama hat, fixed to his coat by means of a heavy string.

He wore black dress trousers. On his feet were brown shoes such as may have graced the sands of Blackpool. The chief item of his costume, however, was a bright blue jacket, adorned with immense frogs fashioned out of black braid. This coat had evidently been obtained either from a circus master or the conductor of a seaside band. It was the kind of tunic usually worn by lion-tamers. The officer had a large bath towel round his neck with which he occasionally mopped his face, as the weather was very hot. From a luggage strap across his shoulder was suspended a lady's hand-bag, or reticule, in brown leather. Had it not been distinctly a lady's bag it would have suggested the pouch in which a bus conductor carries his coppers. This was no doubt a sort of sabretache for carrying dispatches and the like.

It remains to be mentioned that, attached by string to his "suspenders"—which were very conspicuous—this leader of men wore a rapier, or slender sword, with a gilded handle, such as is carried at levées in England. This weapon was no doubt obtained from the same source as the lion-tamer's tunic. Although quite hoarse with previous shouting the officer, thus equipped for active service, gave his orders with explosive vigour. He even addressed the men with no little spirit and emotion, wiping his face with the bath towel between each eloquent period. He was probably on the theme of "death or glory," and was making such references to "hearths and homes" as are applicable to the tropics where there are no fireplaces. It was a relief to the onlookers that he did not draw his levée-dress sword in order to point the way to victory, for as he had a practice of waving his arms like a semaphore he might have done some hurt.

The concluding item of the parade, before the fighting men actually started for the front, was the roll-call. The officer had the names written down in a penny account-book, from which he read with precision, glancing up inquiringly after each name had been jerked forth. None having been found wanting he made a graceful bow, as if he had just sung a song, dropped the account book into the hand-bag, and retired behind a crane to mop his face

with a thoroughness which had been denied him while in the public gaze.

It was interesting to think that these soldiers were the successors, and possibly in some cases the descendants, of the very men who had defended the Spanish Main against Drake and Morgan, who had convoyed the mule trains, and who had fought behind the stockades at Nombre de Dios and the walls of Cartagena.

LXXII.

THE SARGASSO SEA.

AFTER leaving Puerto Colombia the steamer touches at La Guayra, where was "the low white house, two or three hundred feet up the steep mountain side," where Amyas Leigh and his brother had word with the Rose of Torridge. The ship puts in again at Trinidad and Barbados, and then shapes her course for home. "Home!" as Hawkins once wished, "with a good large wind." "Home!" as Drake once cried, "for our voyage is made."

We are to call at the Azores on the way to England, and so must pass across the Sargasso Sea. This remarkable piece of water lies in the centre of the North Atlantic, a tideless pool almost equal in area to the continent of Europe. It lies encircled by the Great Equatorial Current and the Gulf Stream, which ever sweep around its untroubled depths. It is an oasis in the heart of the whirling ocean, a place of sanctuary, a dead sea. Its name is derived from the curious amber-coloured weed, the sargasso, with which its surface is covered and through which the steamer ploughs its way. The weed carries a number of grape-like berries on its branches, while each clump affords a shelter to endless parasites, to minute fishes and tiny crabs. The source of this strange, wandering, rootless plant is not fully known. It is cast into the pool by the Gulf Stream as it hurries northwards. Some believe that the sargasso is torn from the rocks about the Gulf of Mexico, from the shores of Florida and the Bahamas, and that it is drawn from the Stream into the great still eddy. Others affirm that the weed—whatever its origin—grows and multiplies in the sea in the course of its aimless drifting to and fro. The largest collection of the plant is found just south-west of the Azores, and those who maintain its source to be from the land state that it

will need six months to float from Florida to these far-away islands.

This weed-strewn sea seemed strangely beautiful as we made our way across it. The light-blue sky was edged along the horizon with countless fleecy clouds. There came from the south a gentle following wind. The water was a deep indigo colour, every wrinkle, curve and dip of which was polished bright as if its surface were moulded out of purple metal. Here and there a fleck of white foam marked the summit of an ocean furrow. The weed when first seen appeared in the form of long bright lines of plum yellow, streaking the blue and following the trend of the wind. In a while the streaks turned into clusters or islands, which made an amber dome on the crest of the wave and an amber cup in its hollow. These masses varied from a few feet to a few yards across, and they floated past like floes of yellow ice. The individual weeds, when examined closer, looked fresh and brilliant, so that the whole sea might have been littered with a drift of cut flowers. Further on were larger islets that covered an acre or more, great sponge-coloured tracts whose undulating ridges sparkled in the sun. One writer has compared these floating fields to an inundated meadow full of yellow flowers, and the comparison is very apt.[1]

Other things than weeds find their way into this stagnant pool. The Sargasso Sea is haunted by derelict ships that have lost both master and men, and that, with none to guide them, wander blindly through the waste of weed, like weary ghosts seeking a harbour that is never gained. In this ocean purgatory they drift uneasily, round and round the seasons through, in piteous circles until at last the ocean takes them to itself.

In the book just referred to is a chart of the courses followed by these sad craft, as noted, from time to time, by passing ships. Some of these outcasts have wandered here for long. One schooner, the *F. E. Wolston*, cruised to and fro about this sea for at least three years.[2] The Gulf Stream would take her in its warm

[1] *North Atlantic Directory*, by A. G. Findlay : London, 1895.
[2] From 1891 to 1894.

embrace and carry her gently away to the north. Then the Trade Wind would seize her and hurry her south again, to within sight of the palms and the coral reefs. She has rested for days in the hush of a tropic calm, motionless as a sleeping bird. She has fled wildly across the deep before a gale, like a tormented soul chased by revengeful spirits. She has sighted many a living ship as it passed by, trim and bustling, with cheery passengers leaning over the rail, and sailors yarning by the foc'sle gangway. The smug captain, after a long look through his glasses, has stepped into the chart room to enter the name of the poor homeless waif in the log, and the place of his meeting with her.

Think of the ghostly schooner speeding along before a gentle breeze on a moonlight night! Her masts and her broken spars are so white that they may be made of ice. The shining grass on her hull flashes in the light as if she were sheathed in emerald. The shadows of her jagged bulwarks stretch across decks where never is heard the footstep of man. The moonlight falls upon the cabin stair, upon the table under the skylight, upon the swinging lamp. The locker doors open and shut as the vessel heels over, the pilot jacket hanging from a peg is green with mould, while in the water which washes to and fro on the cabin floor is floating the captain's pipe.

On the deck are ever the moan of the creaking rudder, the thud of a block against the mast, the clatter of a kettle tossing loose in the cook's galley, and from all the black hollows of the ship comes the groaning of rotten timbers. The compass in the binnacle points now N.E., now E., now S.W. by S., now S. With each shift of the wind the vessel turns over wearily, while the water spurts out from her weather planks.

The last call comes on some wild day when the terror of the gale is upon her, as she flies down the path of the wind. The seas chase her like a pack of hounds, until in the end a great white wave, majestic and terrible, falls like an executioner's axe upon her quaking deck and her "voyage is made." When the storm lifts, it may be that a wreath of golden weed will mark for a while the spot beneath which she rests.

LXXIII.

THE VANISHING ISLAND AND THE GIANT WHO DIED TWICE.

As the Azores are approached the steamer traverses that ocean area which was the favourite haunt of the Vanishing Island. This island, so full of interest to the ancient mariner, was less definite or more careless as to its precise position than are most tracks of land. In a French chart, bearing the date 1755, it is placed in latitude 29° N. and longitude 25° W. It was called, for reasons which will be explained later, the Isle of St. Brandum, or St. Borondam. It was a mountainous island of great physical attractions and of some ninety leagues in length. Considering its massive size it was curiously shy, for it almost invariably vanished when approached by strangers. Some suppose that it flew away, like a leaf in a wind ; others were content to affirm that it merely disappeared. The matter-of-fact John Sparke, who was one of Hawkins' companions in the voyage of 1564, writes, "About these parts are certain flitting islands, which have been often-times seen, and when men approached near them they vanished." Sparke reverently adds, "it would seem that he is not yet born to whom God hath appointed the finding of them."

Innumerable honest folk had, however, seen St. Brandum. Among them was Alonzo de Espinosa, the governor of Ferro. He issued a statement, supported by the testimony of no less than a hundred reliable witnesses, that he had observed the island forty leagues to the north-west of Ferro, and, more than that, that he and certain of his friends had watched the sun set behind one of its capes.

It was in every way a most desirable island to visit. In the first place it was the retreat of King Rodrigo, which many were

curious to see. It contained besides the beautiful palace and pleasure gardens of Armida. Readers of Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered" will remember that when the crusaders reached the Holy City, Satan employed this lady, who was a professional sorceress, to abduct Rinaldo, the valiant leader. Rinaldo was led away by Armida to this very island, amidst the delights of which he forgot his vow, and the object to which he had devoted his life. To rid him of the lady two soldiers from the Christian army, named Carlo and Ubaldo, were dispatched to the island, which seems then to have been much less timid than it was in later years. They took with them a talisman so exceedingly powerful, or of such voltage, that the witchcraft of Armida became as nought. Rinaldo returned, performed very fearful feats of arms, persuaded Armida to become a Christian, and so all ended well. Whether it was in consequence of this visit of Carlo and Ubaldo that the island became suspicious and took to vanishing on the approach of strangers is not known.

More definite details of St. Brandum are furnished by a Portuguese observer, one Pedro Vello. This Pedro was a pilot who had the good fortune to take the coy island by surprise and actually land upon it. He saw on the sands, as he stepped ashore, the prints of gigantic human feet, at least twice the size of a man's. This was most important evidence, which fully corroborated certain details in the earlier history of the settlement. Vello also found on the beach a cross nailed to a tree, the ashes of a fire, and the usual properties with which most mysterious islands are furnished. Two of his men wandered into the woods, either in search of Armida's garden or at least of a tavern patronised by the giants. They had not been long away when a breeze sprang up. Pedro Vello, after whistling and shouting, was reluctantly compelled to push his boat off and make for the ship. He had no sooner stepped on board than, turning round, he perceived to his horror that the island had disappeared. It does not seem to have either sunk into the sea or to have flown away into the air. It simply was not. As nothing whatever was to be seen of the two men, it is clear that they must have become transparent or

at least soluble at the moment that the island faded; otherwise they must have been seen, for an appreciable second, as two black dots against the now unobstructed horizon. The disconsolate Pedro Vello sailed to and fro for days searching for the island but he never came upon it, nor did he find any material of note floating upon the sea. It would have been a great comfort to him if only he could have picked up the hats his two lost men were wearing.

Many expeditions—some of them very costly and elaborate—were sent out from Europe in search of St. Brandum, but the adventurers were never blessed by a sight of its diffident shores, although the captain of the last exploring party, Don Gaspar Dominguez, took with him two holy friars, in case Satan should be in any way concerned with the island's behaviour.

It is curious that this very part of the world, which has been geographically so much favoured, should have been the habitat of another vanishing island of unimpeachable character and undoubted *bona fides*. Just off the most westerly point of St. Michael's—a point passed by the steamer—there is marked in the chart a shoal, showing fifteen fathoms of water on it, called the Sabrina Shoal. On the night of February 1, 1811, the inhabitants of the west end of St. Michael's were awakened by the sound of a fearful explosion at sea, while those who were within sight of the point saw rise out of the ocean a column of fire and cinders, together with an immense cloud of smoke and of flying ash. Inquisitive boatmen who rowed over the site of this strange manifestation, when all was still again, picked up dead and broiled fish.

On June 12, 1811, H.M. sloop *Sabrina*, when cruising off St. Michael's, witnessed clouds of smoke rising from the sea near the west of the island. The captain of the sloop was filled with joy when to the smoke was added a noise as of cannon. He felt assured that an engagement was in progress, and set all sail upon his ship in the hope that he might reach the scene of the engagement in time to take part therein. The deck was cleared for action and the guns run out. On nearing the spot, however,

there was only to be seen an immense body of smoke revolving on the water horizontally in varied and tortured convolutions. Suddenly out of these coils shot up a hideous column of water, stones, cinders and steam, attended by loud explosions and the flashing of lightning. It was evident that they had come upon a submarine volcano. The phenomena continued and by June 14, to the delight of the curious, the mouth of a crater, still belching fire and cinders, rose out of the sea. It rose until it attained the height of twenty feet. By June 16 the crater—which was as active as ever—had reached an altitude of 150 feet.

The *Sabrina* was compelled to proceed on her mission—which was not that of watching volcanoes—but came back to the same spot again on July 4. She then found a complete volcanic island, quiet and pleasant to look upon, for nothing but a faint steam now rose from its peak. The height of the island had increased to 250 feet. The captain and some of the officers landed, stepping out of the boat upon a narrow beach of ashes. It must have been a moment never to be forgotten. They found the shore steep and the ground hot, while those who had the curiosity to climb up to the edge of the crater reported that the same was filled with steaming water. The captain walked round the newly born island with the assurance that, so far as this piece of the world was concerned, he was the first man. It was an afternoon walk without a parallel. Some time after the sloop had sailed away the island suddenly vanished into the sea, leaving nothing to mark its site but the Sabrina Shoal, which lies now no less than ninety feet below the level of the ocean.

The vanishing island of the Middle Ages came by its name of St. Brandum after this manner. In the sixth century an Irish abbot named St. Brandum, a man of very exceptional piety, left Limerick or Galway, or some such town, for the purpose of discovering the islands of Paradise. On this voyage the devout Irishman was accompanied by his favourite disciple, St. Malo, who was an enthusiast filled with the missionary spirit. They landed on an island in these waters. The first thing that St. Malo

came upon, after stepping out of the boat, was a sepulchre containing the body of a dead giant. Without being in any way surprised at this uncommon "object of the sea-shore," he proceeded at once to resuscitate the deceased native.

The dead man moved in a while, lifted his head, stared about him, and began to ask "where he was." Being reassured by the disciple he crawled out of the sepulchre and sat down on the sand, arranging his scanty grave clothes about him with a proper modesty. He yawned heavily, no doubt, and rubbed his eyes, blinking the while for the sun was bright. He would like to have heard how things had gone on in his household and in the village since his death, but St. Malo would talk of nothing but religion. He put the poor, famished giant through a catechism which would have daunted a student of divinity. It is stated that, in the progress of this discourse, St. Malo obtained from the giant the admission that the islanders had some notions of the Trinity, and was gratified to find that the great man himself was sound in his views as to the torments reserved in Hell for Jews and Pagans. It is to be assumed that this highly specialised conversation was conducted in Erse or Ancient Irish. After an harangue on the doctrines of Christianity which lasted many hours St. Malo succeeded in converting the giant, and at once baptised him in the name of Mildum.

One gathers from the records of this mission that Mildum soon became bored almost to tears. He found, one may infer, that things had not gone on after his death quite as he expected. His friends had fled to the hills, his secret store of liquor had been looted, and his hut was practically up for sale. Moreover wherever he went he would be sure to meet St. Malo, who would at once insist upon addressing him, "in a few words," upon such topics as Transubstantiation, Original Sin, and the Authority of the Church.

At the end of fifteen days Mildum could stand this no longer. So he went to St. Malo, hat in hand, and, while thanking him for all he had done during this improving fortnight, begged that he might be allowed to die again. St. Malo was not hurt by the

request. He ascribed it to a creditable eagerness on Mildum's part to see those Heavens to which he now had access by reason of his conversion. He accordingly gave his permission for the giant's second decease.

With a smile of relief Mildum said "Good-bye!" and walked back to the sepulchre which he had already put in order. Here, kicking off his shoes and begging St. Malo to kindly arrange the stone as he found it, he crept in and settled himself down, with a sigh of great satisfaction, to resume that sleep which the well-meaning Irishman had so rudely interrupted.

LXXIV.

"THE SOUGH OF AN OLD SONG."

ST. MICHAEL'S presents itself as a long island with volcanic hills at either end, and in the centre a wide monotonous slope sweeping down to the sea, at the foot of which lies the town of Ponta Delgada. The town is a tumbled mass of white blocks, which, when seen from a distance, may be a drift of chalk and red sandstone piled up along the shore. The slope behind it is dotted with white houses, which appear as if they were in process of being washed down the incline to join the general heap at the bottom.

The delightful city of Ponta Delgada looks very picturesque from the harbour. A black sea-wall rises out of the pool, with curious and unsteady houses built along the top of it. Each old bastion in this wall has been converted into some sort of semi-amphibious cave-dwelling. There is a very ancient fort too, so green that it might have been fashioned out of a yew hedge. The houses about the haven hang, for the most part, over the sea, as if they were being pushed off the land by the weight of the town. Behind lies the white city, with its deep red roofs and its occasional walls of blue or yellow to temper the glare of it. Out of the medley rise towers and steeples, a Norfolk Island pine or two, and a hill with a church on the summit of it. The little boat harbour is one of the most fascinating features of the place. It may have been brought here bodily from Venice. It is overshadowed with white and blue houses, beneath which are a colonnade of many arches, as well as pillared stairs which lead down to the water. Picturesque folk lounge over the parapets, while to the sea stair are moored gaudy-coloured boats of an unfamiliar type. The way out of this little harbour, towards the town, is through a

noble stone gateway of three arches, elaborately ornamented and ablaze with heraldic devices. It bears the date 1783.

The town itself is bright, clean and cheery, wholesome and trim. In the square by the landing-stage is the handsome Matrice church, a building of strange and quaint design with a fine façade of carved stone, and with many wondrous works in its interior. A still more remarkable and more ancient edifice is the Jesuits' church. In many of its features it is probably unique. Without it has the aspect of a stately country mansion, within it is as elaborately decorated as a Jain temple in India. In the streets are numerous old stone houses of much dignity, certain beautiful convents and many brightly painted buildings of a humbler kind. Mule teams, laden with packs or panniers, are the chief means of transport, although donkeys are much affected by the town folk and lumbering bullock-waggons by the people from the country. Most of the women still wear the dark blue capote, which covers them head and foot, as with a monk's cowl and cloak. This dress must be one of the most curious extremes ever reached in the erratic evolution of female clothing. On the outskirts of the town are dainty gardens which add not a little to the charm of the White City.

All who idled the day ashore came back to the ship with the assurance that St. Michael's was a pleasant place. It seemed from the little they said that the secret of the charm was not to be found in the quaint Venetian boat harbour, nor about the ancient forts and walls, nor in the shades of the incense-scented churches, but that it had to do with something more subtle and unexpected. It was merely this, that after many months in the tropics—perhaps after many years—they had come upon things that reminded them of England.

There was, in the first place, a clean, keen air, that brought with it memories of gusty chalk cliffs and gorse-covered downs. It was a white wind, alert and virile, shrewd as chill steel, a familiar wind the mere breathing of which was a nearly forgotten joy. After the drugged, listless atmosphere that stews over the land of palms, it came as a welcome, satisfying draught.

Moreover there fell upon the nostrils the well-remembered smell of the good, brown earth, the savour of our English mother earth, the smell of the ploughed field and of the spade-turned garden. There is no such sense of the land in the alien tropics, rich as the soil may be and abundant as may be the rain.

Delightful too, after many months, was the first sight of leafless trees bearing their strong limbs and their tingling branches to the kindly sky. After the extravagant, never-fading green of the South, this sight brought with it a great measure of relief, for persistent splendour is of all things the most wearisome. Fresh from the garish display of imperial-tinted flowers, it was like meeting with an old village friend to see once more the common nettle and a crop of dandelions. The Portuguese gardener who was proud to show a poor, marasmic palm, shivering in the open, was much surprised at the rapture these weeds produced, nor could he understand the joy which greeted a clump of ferns and a stretch of real grass—not Guinea grass nor Bahama grass—but the grass of the lawn and the open common.

Then, again, on all sides were cottages with chimneys and the rare sight of smoke rising heavenwards, bringing with it the smell of burning wood, and the recollection, well-nigh blotted out, of firesides around which folk gather when the day is done.

These pleasant sights touched a chord of memory, primitive enough it may be, yet precious to all whose homes lie in northern latitudes. In place of the florid poetry and gaudy romance of the Indies we had come unexpectedly upon lines from a spelling book, upon childish verses learnt in the nursery, upon "the sough of an old song."

WEST INDIES
and
SPANISH MAIN
on Mercator's Projection
NORTH AMERICA
MISSISSIPPI
ALABAMA
LOUISIANA
TEXAS
FLORIDA
New Orleans
Galveston
Mouth of Mississippi R.
GULF OF MEXICO
GULF STREAM
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Bahama Islands
Gt. Bahama
Abaco
Bimini Is.
C. Sable
Florida Strait
Eleuthera
Cat I.
Watlings I.
Andros
Long I.
Crooked I.
Mariguana
Caicos Is.
Havana
CUBA
I. of Pines
Puerto Principe
Inagua
Yucatan Channel
C. Catoche
Gulf of Campeachy
San Juan d' Ulloa
CAMPEACHY
YUCATAN
BRITISH HONDURAS
Belize
Gulf of Honduras
Tehuantepec
Gulf of Tehuantepec
Little Cayman
Grand Cayman
Santiago de Cuba
Windward Passage
Tortuga
Cap Haitien
La Navidad
Ysabel
Pto. Plata
Haiti
S. DOMINGO
JAMAICA
Port Antonio
C. Tiburon
Kingston
Pedro Bank
Rosalind Bank
Thunder Knoll
Serranilla Bank
Mona Passage
Mona I.
Port au Prince
S. Domingo
San Juan
Puerto Rico
Virgins I.
St. Thomas
Anegada Passage
Sombrero
Anguilla
Saba
St. Eustatius
St. Kitts
Nevis
Berbuda
Antigua
Montserrat
Guadeloupe
Marie Galante
The Saints
Bird I.
Dominica
Martinique
St. Lucia
St. Vincent
Barbados
Grenada
Tobago
Trinidad
Margarita
Tortuga
La Guayra
Caracas
Maracaibo
Pt. Gallinas
Oruba I.
Curacoa
Buen Ayre
Aves
Santa Marta
Puerto Colombia
Cartagena
Mosquito Coast
Mosquito Gulf
Chagres
Escudo de Veragua
Porto Bello
Nombre de Dios
Metetas Is.
Colon
Gulf of Darien
Panama
Coiba
G. de S. Miguel
Atrato Depression
COSTA RICA
NICARAGUA
HONDURAS
GUATEMALA
CENTRAL AMERICA
PACIFIC OCEAN
CARIBBEAN SEA
COLOMBIA
VENEZUELA
SOUTH AMERICA
G. of Paria
Orinoco Delta
Orinoco R.
Margarita
95°
90°
85°
80°
75°
70°
65°
60°
30°
25°
20°
15°
10°
Longitude West 80° of Greenwich
Emery Walker Sc.

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